



Mileven Week 2018 by FangirlingStrangerThings

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Summary: A series of one shots created specially for Mileven Week 2018. Every one shot is unique, but all of them celebrate the love and beautiful ship that is Mileven. Day 3: Mike and El were childhood sweethearts, boyfriend and girlfriend until El was forced to move to California in freshman year. They haven't seen each other in 14 years. Enter Cupid Will and Hawkins High School Reunion.

1. The Letters From My Heart

The Letters From My Heart

AN: HAPPY STRANGER THINGS DAY! And HAPPY MILEVEN WEEK!

I am taking part in the Mileven Week themes, which is when the admins of Mileven Week on Tumblr have chosen a theme for writers and artists to use to inspire stories and art.

Today's theme is Long Distance.

I have tried to keep it canon for this first one and ease my way in. I hope you enjoy it! :-D

Day 1

The words hitting Mike's ears seemed to blur, like an echo from another room. He was sat at the dining room table, his eyes glazed over as he stared through the window, the usually dark yard lit up by search lights glowing through the night.

"Why didn't think you could *talk* to me Michael?" his mom was asking in a wavering voice, both of his parents sat across the table, having hurried him into the dining room the moment the FBI had left the house. "We could have helped you."

"*Helped?*" Ted grumbled in surprise, turning to look at his wife. "He was harbouring a *Russian Spy*."

"She's *not* a Russian Spy..." Mike whispered through gritted teeth, his eyes still on the window. His mind was playing tricks on him. Had he really seen El stood in the living room window? Her eyes full of sorrow as she stared right back at him.

"Was this because of Will?" Karen pressed on. "Honey I know you were upset but bringing a girl like that into this house was dangerous..."

"She's *not* dangerous," Mike spat out, his eyes glowering with anger as

he finally tore his gaze from the window and stared at his startled parents.

"You're saying the FBI are *lying* son?" Ted laughed in exasperation, shaking his head as if the mere thought of the government being corrupt was ludicrous.

"Yes, they're lying!" Mike shouted, standing up from his seat, his body trembling with grief, pain and adrenaline. "S-She...she was a scared girl who only hurt anyone to protect us, to protect *me*!"

"What do you mean she protected you Michael?" Karen asked quietly, her perfectly neat eyebrows lowered in concern as her eyes danced over her son's broken face.

Mike huffed in frustration and shook his head, his fists clenched at his sides. "It doesn't matter," he said bitterly. "You wouldn't believe me anyway. You're too busy believing the FBI!"

He turned on his heel and stormed off, feeling the heat of his anger pouring off him in waves.

"We are not done here son!" Ted shouted out just as Mike raised his left hand and gestured with his middle finger in his parent's direction.

"Michael!" Karen gasped in shock.

"You're grounded!" Ted called more harshly than he had ever spoken before.

Mike didn't look back, his face like thunder as he rolled his eyes. Grounded, yeah right. As if he ever listened to his parents' rules.

He stomped down the stairs of the basement, purposefully being as loud as possible, his dirty sneakers smacking against the wood. His heart was racing and felt lodged in his throat, he barely knew what he was doing as he headed towards the blanket fort.

His amber eyes lingered on the sleeping bag and pillow where El had slept for most of the week and his stomach twisted with pain.

"*Good bye Mike*"

Even just replaying her final words in his mind was too painful and he flinched, turning his head away from the fort as a tear slid down his face. His chest was heaving with grief and confusion. He had seen her destroy the Demogorgon, sacrificing herself in the process. But he had seen her tonight, he was so sure. Her silhouette in the tall window still flickering in his eyes.

If only he had a way of checking. A way of knowing that she was still...

He couldn't say the words, but his resolve built inside of his heart as he hurried over to his backpack, rooting in it until he pulled out his Super Com with shaky hands.

Mike's gaze nervously flickered back to the blanket fort and for a moment he just stared at it, imagining her sat there, legs crossed wearing his clothes and her attention focused on the Super Com as she tried to prove Will was still alive. Guilt riddled through Mike's veins when he remembered the two times within that week that he had shouted at her. When he told her that Lucas was right about her and that she had lied. His breath stuttered in pain and numbly he made his way over to the blanket fort, crawling into the space and crossing his own legs, mimicking El's position.

It took him a few moments to summon the courage to even turn the Super Com on. Scared of what he might hear, scared of hearing *nothing*.

Mike inhaled sharply through his nose and exhaled a deep nervous breath as he closed his eyes tight and pressed down the speaker button on the radio. "El?...El are you out there? It's...it's me, Mike..."

There was dead silence on the radio and Mike sighed as he opened his eyes and tried again. "El *please*. I...I need to know if I really saw you tonight...or if it's all in my head." He tried to swallow down the lump in his throat. "Just please...come home if you can. I-I'll wait for you and get some Eggos for you a-and I'll speak to my mom, she'll understand. And maybe...maybe we can still go to the Snow Ball?"

The continued static tugged and cracked at Mike's hope, his chest feeling incredibly tight as the exhaustion and devastation of the night

hit him. His eyesight blurred with unshed tears as his sense of gravity shifted, his head hitting the pillow and his body curling in on itself.

*The cliff. The jump. El's determined face as she saved him. Mike's stomach swooping with awe. Holding her close, convincing her she wasn't a monster. The bathroom. "Still pretty?" whispered in his heart. "Yeah pretty. **Really** pretty." The mad flutter of butterflies as she moved closer, her bright eyes pulling him in. Running from the bad man. Hiding in the bus. The pool. El cold and scared as she lay her head on his shoulder. Showing her the cafeteria. Asking her to the Snow Ball. Trying to explain exactly what she meant to him. **Kissing** her. His body exploding with happiness with just how perfect it had felt.. The lab. The Demogorgon. "Eleven **stop**!" His back hitting the cabinet, his eyes filled with tears as she turned back to look at him, all her dreams shattered within her hazel eyes. "Good bye Mike" His heart **breaking**.*

Day 47

The static crackled in her ears, her mind focusing on finding the one person she needed to see over the billions of people in the world. His voice started to break through the darkness, his smooth and gentle tone easing the ache in her heart as El finally opened her eyes.

There he was in, in their fort just as he had been every night. El had been with him in the void since day 3 when she had finally found some food and had the energy to try and reach out to him in the darkness.

She remembered how the night of the Snow Ball was the first time she had seen Mike *really* cry, his voice wavering between wrecked sobs as he apologised about breaking his promise. It had broken El and she had never needed him more. But she had no energy, she couldn't communicate with him, only watch his pain as her own heart cried out.

El's hazel eyes now flooded with concern as she took Mike in, noticing the way he was hunched over, flinching now and again as he grabbed his side. There was a bruise forming under his eye and a cut to his lip. El's mouth parted in fear, her eyes widening as she wondered who or what had done this to Mike. Anger started to

bubble in her stomach, *no one* hurt Mike.

"El?" Mike croaked tiredly, his face forlorn and his mop of dark hair lowered like he had given up. "It's day 47, 8.52pm. I had a bad day today...a *really* bad day." He was mumbling and quiet and El shuffled closer on her knees, barely blinking or breathing as she tried to listen avidly to Mike.

"Troy asked where my freak girlfriend was," Mike closed his eyes, wincing slightly from the pain of the bruising. "And I just *lost* it El. I wanna say I gave as good as I got but look at me..." Mike snorted in frustration and misery, shaking his head. "I have no idea why you even liked me. I'm weak, I can't even stick up for my..."

Whatever he was going to say he cut himself off, taking a shaky deep breath. "Lucas and Dustin think I should stop looking for you now... but I just *can't* El. I know you're out there, just *please* give me a sign." Mike sounded so pained, every word laced in misery as he opened his eyes, having no idea he was staring straight at El, tears running down her cheeks.

She jolted slightly when Mike suddenly turned his head, a look of agitation flickering at his handsome features. "I'm busy!" he shouted, his voice breaking slightly. El couldn't hear the response but she watched as Mike rolled his eyes, his face stony and his jaw tight. "*Fine*, just one minute!"

He stumbled slightly bringing the Super Com back up to his mouth and his face was one more remorse and sad. "I'm sorry El I've gotta go. Mom is making me do a load of chores because of the fight." He shook his head in exasperation, "but that doesn't matter. Just know that I won't give up on you."

Mike lowered the aerial and carefully placed the Super Com back onto the pillows before shouting, "coming!" and stomping out of sight, his shape disappearing into the darkness as El returned to her bedroom.

She ripped the black tie away from her eyes and blinked as the warmth of her room came into view. El exhaled a deep breath, her chest aching and her fingers still itching with the need to reach out

and touch Mike.

She barely slept that night, her eyes glazed over and unfocused as Hopper read to her, his usually soothing and deep voice unable to calm her as she thought about the injuries Mike had gained trying to protect her. Her thoughts flickered to that mouth breather Troy and she worked her jaw tightly, her eyes narrowing slightly. *No one* got away with hurting Mike.

Ten minutes after Hopper had left the cabin the next day, El rose from the couch, leaving her Soap Operas behind for one day as she unlocked the door with her mind, only a small amount of fear of the outside world humming in her body as she left the cabin and set off through the woods.

She was going to find Troy and she was going to make him *pay*.

A branch snapped and El whirled around, coming face to face with Hopper who looked just as shocked to see her as she was to see him. For a moment there was silence, but then the Chief blinked and hurried over to her, taking her arm and gently tugging her back towards the cabin.

"What are you doing out here?" Hopper whispered in a panicked voice as his blue eyes quickly shot around the woods looking for any potential threats.

El let herself be led but she was getting angry, feeling the emotions building in her gut. "You went to work," she stated, frustrated that he had caught her leaving.

"I just got to the truck and realised I forgot my hat, what's your excuse?" Hopper shot back, his initial concern now becoming something more defensive and irritated.

"I was going to kill the mouth breather Troy."

Hopper's bushy eyebrows flew up his creased forehead and he blinked rapidly, before pausing, making El stop too. "I *hope* you're joking."

When El merely shrugged, her whole frame tense as she avoided his

eyes, Hopper sighed heavily. "You can't kill anyone kid...okay maybe I'll allow an exception for those idiots at the lab if you're in danger. But it's *illegal*. Remember that word? It means it's not allowed, that you would be locked up again."

El looked down at the forest floor, the earth damp from the bitter frost of the late December weather. "He hurt Mike," she muttered, her voice croaking with pain.

Hopper watched her for a moment and poised his lips in deep thought, sadness in his eyes as he watched El feeling so helpless. He removed his hand off her upper arm and moved his palms to her shoulders instead. El slowly and carefully looked up at Hopper, her eyes cautious.

"I'll check in on Mike, okay? I'll say I had a concerned teacher mentioning his injuries. If I think his injuries are enough to bring that Troy kid down the station, then that's what I'll do."

El nodded slowly, her whole face incredibly tight, like she was trying to hold herself together and it was taking all of her energy. "I miss him," she choked out as a tear escaped her lower lashes and dropped down her pale cheek.

Hopper heaved a heavy breath and looked into El's bambi eyes, feeling guilt mix in with the determination to keep her safe. He knew she wanted to see the Wheeler boy, it was obvious how much he meant to her. But letting El see Mike was exposure to the outside world and they couldn't risk it. Hopper tried desperately to think of something to say that might comfort El.

He looked at her, blue eyes meeting hazel eyes and he said, "*soon*. You will see him soon."

Day 94

"El are you there? It's Mike again. It's day 94, 7.40pm. And I'm here, I'm *still* here." Mike said with a weak smile.

There was something different about today El pondered as she knelt

down in front of Mike. He seemed *tidier*. His hair not as messy, but silky like it had just been washed. El longed to know what it smelt like. Mike was wearing some kind of shirt with buttons down the front, smart like the shirts Hopper owned. He was playing with the hem of his black jeans and El marvelled at how he was getting taller, the edge of his jeans now riding up past his ankles when he sat down.

There was a plate of Eggos placed on his right side and a sealed red card. El looked at it with curiosity before Mike spoke again, all of her attention going straight back onto his face which seemed slimmer. Not in a bad way of course. His jaw line was becoming more pronounced and El couldn't stop looking at his sharp cheek bones or how his thinner face made his lips even bigger. The memory of kissing those lips hit El's heart so forcefully that she gasped, her sharp breath echoing in the void.

"Today is, um, Valentine's Day..." Mike said coughed awkwardly as he rubbed at the back of his neck. "It's a day where you show the person you lo-...the person you *like* how much they mean to you." El stared in awe as Mike's pale freckled cheeks blushed pink.

"Pretty," El whispered in captivation.

Mike's eyes widened, and he stared at the Super Com having heard a slight change in the static. "El?!" he asked with excitement, his smile bright and his chest heaving with suspense.

El bit into her lower lip painfully, *knowing* she couldn't say anything. She had promised Hopper that when she visited Mike in the void she would only observe him. She clenched her fists, her nails digging into her palms, grounding her as she looked away from Mike for the moment, not able to see the disappointment flicker back into his handsome features.

When El heard a sigh escape his lips she hesitantly looked back at him, finding his head dipped down so she couldn't look into his eyes. Perhaps that was for the best. Every time she saw him crumble it broke her down piece by piece.

Mike took a deep inhale and exhale and then moved the Super Com back to his mouth. "If you had been here maybe...maybe we could

have spent Valentine's day together. I still um, I still really like you El. You're the only girl I'd want to celebrate today with."

Tears started to prick at El's eyes and her lower lip wobbled as she watched Mike, wanting nothing more than to be by his side, to spend *every day* with him. It seemed like an impossible dream the more days that passed between them.

Mike laughed, quickly and sharply as he sniffled and rubbed the sleeve of his shirt against his eyes. "Will asked me today if you were my girlfriend. I didn't even know what to say because I know you didn't know what girlfriend meant...but El you *always* understood." Mike heaved a sigh and shook his head, "I just wish you were here. I wish we could have spent Valentine's together."

His wet amber eyes flickered anxiously to the red sealed card and his Adam's Apple bobbed. "I um...I got you a Valentine's card. I won't read it out *loud* or anything. I'll keep it here for you...obviously under the pillow otherwise Lucas and Dustin will *definitely* think I've lost it."

El eyed the card with a desperate desire, her fingers itching to open it, to know what Mike had written for her. Her own frustration was thrumming in her pulse and all she wanted to do was *scream*.

"I would have got you a present," Mike said looking around at his belongings. "But I couldn't exactly give you flowers and um, I didn't really know what you'd like. There's Rory of course. I could have given you my Rubix cube, but I haven't seen it in months."

Mike thought of something else to say, rolling his plump lower lip between his teeth. "Oh! Hopper visited me again. He said there wasn't any more news of you, but I know that can't be true. Because you're out there, I...I *know* you are."

El sighed quietly watching intently as Mike's smooth brow furrowed in thought. "I think *Hopper* stole my Rubix cube..." He laughed gently in confusion and El felt a smile curve on her lips, her eyes sparkling and the wings of hummingbirds flapping in her stomach. He rarely laughed or truly smiled, but when he *did*, for that moment everything felt like it would be okay.

Mike's smile slowly disappeared as El knew it would and he sighed, his eyes glazing over once more. "I just miss you El. I miss you more than I ever thought was possible," he admitted as his eyes flickered around the blanket fort that he sat in. "Sometimes...sometimes I feel like it was all a dream. The Upside Down, the Demogorgon, *you*."

"I just wish I could see you," Mike whispered, his words too painful to be uttered any louder. "I wish I could see you smiling or laughing, and..." he swallowed nervously, his breath catching in his throat before a flickering fire of courage like up his amber eyes. "I wish I could tell you that I'm in lo – "

"Mike!"

Dustin's voice made both Mike and El jump, breaking the moment completely as Mike's cheeks flushed deep red. "What are you doing on this channel?"

"What are you doing radioing me this late?" Mike bit back, frustration and embarrassment creeping up his neck.

Dustin snorted in amusement, "Mike it's like 8pm..."

"Well I was busy," Mike snapped as he abruptly turned off the Super Com and threw it to the side where it hit the pillow. His dark eyes went to the Eggos and the card and his jaw set, "stupid. I'm so stupid," he muttered to himself, clambering out of the fort while El watched on in despair. Her cheeks warm with tears and her fragile heart breaking open.

Within seconds of ripping off the black tie El was at Hopper's side where he was trying to fix one of the kitchen cabinets, a cigarette hanging out of his mouth.

"Now," El stated, her shoulder shaking from her sobs. "I need to see Mike *now*."

Hopper almost dropped his cigarette at her demand, the broken look on her face making his own heart ache. He hesitantly pulled the cigarette out of his mouth, stubbing it out in the tray and standing up.

"El," he tried to say softly, knowing that the girl he was coming to think of as a daughter was going through immeasurable pain. Pain that was deep rooted in her before Mike Wheeler was even on the scene.

"You will see him soon – "

"NO!" El shouted, her chin wobbling and her cries making her breathless. Hopper's blue eyes nervously glanced over at the shelves noticing how their contents was rattling. "I need to see him NOW."

Hopper bit his lip wishing he had let Joyce in on this secret, knowing that when it came to matters of the heart he wasn't exactly an open book, and he *never* said the right thing. Hopper nervously brushed his hand across his mouth, scratching against his stubble.

He lowered himself onto the floor so that he was eye level with the crying girl and tried again to say *something* comforting. "El this won't be forever, I can promise you that. You've got to think of this as like a...long distance relationship."

"What does that mean?" El sniffled, hiccupping slightly as she wiped at her wet red eyes.

Hopper was thankful that he seemed to have grabbed her attention and hurried to speak. "Remember when we started history lessons and I told you about the different world wars?"

El nodded in understanding but didn't speak, still sniffing as she tried to calm her breathing.

"Okay so in the war, soldiers went *months* and *months* without communication from their family and partner."

"What did they do?" El hiccupped, wiping her wet cheeks with the sleeve of her soft cream and pink pyjamas.

"They wrote letters to each other. They wrote about how they missed each other and what they had been doing."

"I can write letters to Mike?" El asked hopefully while Hopper hesitated.

"You wouldn't be able to *send* them to him El it's too dangerous," when he saw the broken expression flood back in her eyes he quickly added. "Not yet anyway. But you could write them, and when you two do reunite, which you will, then he can read them all."

El slowly lifted her wet and vulnerable eyes to look at Hopper, hesitation written all over her expression as she slowly whispered, "promise?"

Hopper smiled sadly and nodded his head, "promise kid." El took him by surprise doing something he would have never expected of her, hugging him. He inhaled sharply, completely stunned by her move before slowly hugging her back, his heart in his throat as tears pricked at the corners of his eyes. He shut his eyes, realising how long it had been since he had a hug from a daughter.

"Here you go kid," Hopper said a little while later, handing El over a pad of paper and a pen. She was tucked up in bed, Mike's stolen Rubik Cube hooked under her arm as she reached for the paper. She stared down at it and frowned, "I can't write..." she mumbled.

Hopper laughed kindly, more surprised by her words than anything else. "*Of course* you can write, we've been doing lessons for months now."

El shook her head, "I can't write good...it won't be...*pretty*."

The smile wiped off Hopper's face and he saw the vulnerability in El's eyes, saw the way she wanted to impress Mike, how she wanted to be like any other girl her age. But she was different, she was *special*, and she needed to know that.

"Kid," Hopper said with a gentle smile. "Mike won't care what your handwriting looks like. He'll just be so happy with whatever you give him."

El looked down at the blank paper again and smiled hesitantly, sweetly. She bit her lip and glanced back at Hopper. "Before a letter we need to make a card," she spoke seriously, nodding her head as if to confirm her words.

Hopper frowned in confusion. "A card?"

El smiled sheepishly and looked back at the paper, "a *Valentine's* card."

"Good lord..." Hopper mumbled to himself.

Day 103

"I feel like there's so much I want to ask you. Like I don't even know what your favourite colour is, or if you would like blueberry Eggos or chocolate chip."

Mike,

I eat Eggos if I don't break the rules. There are so many rules. You never gave me rules.

My favourite colour is yellow. It reminds me of the sun. It is bright and warm and makes me think of you. Pink is pretty too. I miss my pretty dress, but I miss you more.

Soon. Hopper says soon.

El

Day 140

"I got in trouble today for writing your name in the bathroom stalls at school. People write so much crap in there that I thought I should write something meaningful. I don't care that my parents grounded me. I haven't forgotten about you El. I'm *still* here, I still want you to come home..."

Mike,

I asked Hopper to tell your parents they were wrong for being mean to you. He said that what you did was vandalism and that you deserved grounding. I threw a chair at him and now I'm grounded too.

I want to be home with you.

El

Day 162

"It's my birthday today El. The boys got me comics and my parents got me an Atari to play games on. But I only wanted you. I kept hoping you'd appear. I'm sorry, I'm not angry at you I swear. I just...I just want you back."

Mike,

Hopper told me what birthday meant. He seemed sad when I asked and now I can't stop crying because I want to be with you on your birthday. I am sorry I am not there with you. Sometimes I think you know I'm sat with you but then you don't believe yourself and you walk away.

I can't wait until the day when I can stop you walking away.

Happy birthday Mike.

El

Day 232

"El are you there? Please just give me a sign. I saw Hopper again today and he said there still isn't any news. I feel like he's lying sometimes, he just looks guilty. And I feel paranoid because does he know something I don't? Does he know you're de – no I can't even say it..."

Mike,

I screamed at Hopper. He says soon but he doesn't mean it. He is a liar Mike and friends don't lie. I want to be home with you, but he says it isn't safe. Is he lying to me? I learnt the word trust today. He says I should trust him.

I trust you.

El

Day 300

"I can't believe it's been 300 days without you El. I still dream about you, I still think about you l-leaving and...and sometimes I dream about our kiss. Did you know that is what I did in the cafeteria? I *kissed* you El because I like you. I still really, *really* like you."

Mike,

I really like you too. In my soap operas they called it love. I looked it up in my dictionary and it said, 'a strong feeling of deep affection for somebody/something'. I think that better describes how I feel about you more than like.

But then people in my soap operas say they love each other, but then they go and kiss someone else. I couldn't do that to you Mike. I only want to kiss you. I dream of our kiss too.

El

Day 353

"It's day 353. I had a bad day today, I don't know why. I guess I wish you were here...I mean, we all do. If you're out there, *please*...just give me a sign."

"Mike?"

"Eleven?"

Mike,

I miss you. I miss you so much.

I don't care what Hopper says. I am going to see you tomorrow. It's going to be okay, you won't need to feel sad anymore.

I'm coming home Mike. I love you.

El

The door to the Byers house opened with a loud creak, the room filled with racing hearts and adrenaline fuelled veins as they all

prepared to face the Demodogs. Mike knows his weapon of a candle stick is going to be no match against the monsters, he can hardly think straight, his heart crying, wishing he could have seen El *one more time...*

And then his dark world explodes with colour as Mike stares at the girl who had stolen his heart. Watching for a moment in complete shock as she stands, dominating the scene, her beautiful and more mature face filled with courage.

Mike's moving without barely being conscious of it and then their eyes lock, making eye contact for the first time since she had turned to tell him a heart-breaking good bye.

He can barely hear past the erratic pounding of his heart and the mad fluttering of butterflies in his stomach. His lips are slightly parted as he gets closer to her, his eyes wide and brimmed with tears. Is she real? Is he dreaming right now? Or did he die, and this is heaven?

But as he sees El's choice of clothing and the blood running down from her nostril, he knows this has to be real. She's *aged*. She *alive*.

"Eleven," Mike barely whispers, completely breathless and overwhelmed.

"Mike," El chokes before they are in each other's arms, holding onto each other so tightly it would probably be painful if they weren't so overcome with emotion. Mike can hear El sobbing against him, her chest vibrating with every breath. She real, she *alive*. He can't believe it.

Mike holds El even closer because he *never* wants to let her go again, but he needs her to know the words of his heart. He pulls back ever so slightly, but keeps her within his hold, wanting to feel her. Warm, solid and alive.

"I never gave up on you," Mike croaks, tears streaming in his eyes. El gasps through her own tears and smiles, because they are reunited *finally* and it's everything they wanted.

"I called you every night," Mike says almost proudly, his smile so

wide it creases his wet cheeks. "Every night for – "

"353 days."

Mike's breath stutters in his throat as he stares down at El, his eyes widening in awe, shock and confusion.

She looks at him softly, her hazel eyes swimming with tears but a gentleness and love in her expression.

"I heard."

February 14th, 1985

"What is *that*?" Mike chuckled with amusement from the couch in the cabin, as he watched El levitate a box from her bedroom. His eyes followed its path to where it landed delicately on the coffee table in front of him.

It was Valentine's day and after a lot of begging and an embarrassing talk between Hopper and Mike about "no funny business", the couple had been allowed to spend the afternoon together.

El had all but pushed Hopper out of the cabin the moment Mike had arrived after school, his backpack laden with gifts and bouquet of red roses in his hands.

"Okay, okay I'm going," Hopper grumbled as he walked down the porch steps. "But I'll be back in four hours. You better behave Wheeler!" Mike had blushed but nodded his head obediently.

The moment Hopper had disappeared within the woods Mike turned to El, a grin curved on his lips as he cupped her soft cheeks and leaned down to kiss her. She reached up as well because he was getting *so tall* and met him half way.

They both smiled into the kiss, El's arms going around his strong neck and Mike's hands moving to her waist. The feeling of kissing Mike was addictive to El, sweeter than Eggo's and more powerful than a promise. While for Mike it felt like he had no hold on gravity, like he was literally floating from how happy and whole he was every time

El was in his arms.

So now when Mike looked at the box and realised there was hundreds of sealed letters with his name on, all in El's adorable handwriting, he felt his breath stutter and his lips part in astonishment.

El sat down next to him, looking pleased with herself but there was a slight anxiety at the edge of her eyes that Mike noticed as he stared back at her.

She reached for his hand, their fingers immediately entwining like two perfect puzzle pieces. "You called me for 353 days. And I *wrote* to you for 353 days."

Mike continued to gaze at her, stunned and overwhelmed while El tentatively bit into her lower lip. "I only stopped 12 days ago," she confessed with a small smile.

"El," Mike croaked out, his face still filled with awe as he looked between his girlfriend and the 353 sealed cards. He didn't know what to say, but he hesitantly reached for one.

El curled up into his side, Mike immediately putting his arm around her, cocooning her in his loving embrace as together they opened the first envelope. Mike didn't even realise he was shaking until El's warm palm gently pressed over the back of his hand. He looked at her, finding her eyes immediately.

They were so beautiful her eyes. Golden hazel, warm and loving. Something that he didn't think he was ever going to be able to look at again. He never thought he would get this opportunity, never realised how desperately she had wanted to see him too.

Mike leaned forward, their foreheads brushing together as their eyes fluttered closed. "I love you El, more than anything."

El smiled softly, "I love you too Mike. Much more than Eggos and Soap Operas..."

Mike laughed, his laugh now filled with happiness and contentment. It still made El smile and it still filled her heart with warmth and her

stomach with hummingbirds.

She settled back into his embrace and through the next few hours, they read through the letters together. Sometimes laughing, sometimes crying. Other times smiling and sometimes just needing to kiss, to show how desperately they loved each other. That the struggle of what Hopper had called a long distance relationship had been worth it.

They were together now, and with a shared smile and hopeful glint in their gazes, they knew this was only the beginning of their love story.

AN: Okay I REALLY enjoyed writing this! It just felt very cathartic, like I needed it after season 2.

I hope you enjoyed it too. Please let me know your thoughts, whatever they are!

I'll be back with tomorrow's theme of 'Fate' and a new one shot :-D

2. It's In The Cards

It's in The Cards

AN: It's Day 2 of Mileven Week! And officially 35 years since Mike and El first met each other. Happy anniversary to my favourite couple and ship!

Today's theme is **Fate**. So please enjoy this light-hearted AU, which a few clumsy, awkward and psychic elements thrown in. No angst in sight with this one!

Also, please note I am not a Clairvoyant, but I have been to a few Psychic Fairs and had a some really accurate readings of my own! Loved them!

"Max I'm *not* going to a psychic fair," El repeated for what felt like the seventeenth time during the thirty-minute phone call with her best friend.

"Oh come on El, it'll be a laugh! And I don't wanna go *alone*..." Max pleaded, no doubt pouting right now. El rolled her eyes, slowly pacing her hotel room, her feet bare against the thick mauve carpet.

She crossed past the king sized bed towards the floor to ceiling window, pushing back the drapes to take in the spectacular view of San Diego.

"Why do you want to go to this Psychic Fair anyway?" El asked with a slight frown, her hazel eyes fixated on the beach in the distance. The sun was starting to set, falling deeper below the purple and blue horizon. It was picture perfect.

Max sighed pensively down the phone, "*well* I get married in three days and I don't know...I just feel like I need a bit of courage."

Max's words startled El who blinked in surprise. "Are you having doubts about marrying Lucas?!" She couldn't help the shock in her voice at her best friend's revelation. Max and Lucas were made for

each other, their personalities complimenting perfectly, they brought out the best in each other and it was obvious how in love they were.

In the three years that El had known Max, both of them working at the same hospital in the San Francisco bay, she had also wanted what her best friend had. A soulmate, someone to really share the highs and lows of life with.

"No of course I'm not having doubts about Lucas!" Max exclaimed, her voice shrill as if even the thought was too terrifying to comprehend.

El stayed silent, knowing her best friend wanted to say more about whatever was bothering her so deeply. She continued to look out at the view, the sky a mixture of gold and indigo now and the ocean an inky blue.

"I think it's more a case of cold feet than anything else," Max finally admitted. "I love Lucas so much...but look at my parents, they ended up going through a divorce and it was brutal El. What if marrying Lucas means it'll eventually be the end of us?"

El shook her head adamantly even though her best friend wasn't there to see it. She wanted to laugh at how ludicrous Max's worries were but knew that they came from a vulnerable place. She needed reassuring and not judgement. "Max, you are *not* your parents, okay? You and Lucas just *work*. Everyone can see how much you love each other."

"I know you're right," Max mumbled before exhaling a steady breath. "I love him. I'm just scared of losing him El."

"Just live in the moment," El said with a pleased grin, happy to hear Max finally reasoning over her worries. "And in three days you are getting to marry the man you love on the beach you grew up on, surrounded by your family and friends."

"You're so cheesy El," Max snorted, making both of the girls laugh.

"I just love you and want the best for you," El said with a warm smile. "Plus, what kind of maid of honour would I be if I let you get

panicked before your wedding?"

"A terrible one," Max agreed, her voice light and breezy now. "So," she added with a brisk exhale and El could tell she was grinning. "Are you going to come with me to the Psychic Fair? You *did* say to live in the moment..."

El pulled her bottom lip between her teeth wanting to interject that a Psychic wasn't going to give Max the answers she wanted and that the whole thing was probably a farce. If it made her best friend more at ease, than she supposed it wouldn't be a wasted day.

"Okay," El huffed, smiling slightly when she heard Max cheer in triumph. "But I'm only going because you're my best friend! I'm not expecting to get anything out of this," she was quick to add.

"Oh this is going to be brilliant," Max said breathlessly. "I've been to one before, and usually there are at least a dozen psychics who can give you different readings with cards, or palm reading or..."

El let Max go off on a tangent whilst her hazel eyes watched the sun dip below the horizon, a gleam of gold just visible as she thought about this Psychic Fair and smirked to herself, *as if I'm going to find answers **there**.*

"So," Max said loudly over the rustling of people moving about and the steady hum of voices vibrating through the room. "What do you think?"

El looked around the heaving room; there was too many people, all of them filtering around, trying to get to the tables where the psychics were sat, others were buying crystals off stalls, having Reiki massages or watching a man playing a set of bongos.

A sudden pungent smell hit El's nose and she crinkled her face in distaste. "It stinks..."

"Oh, that's just the incense," Max said happily as she linked arms with El and got her to move forward into the warm space.

"It's kind of overpowering," El coughed as she waved her hand in her

face to try and dispel some of the strong incense away from her nostrils.

"You'll get used to it," Max shrugged with a grin, her blue eyes already flickering around the room with excitement.

El look around too, her brow furrowed and her bottom lip between her teeth. "Um...so what do we *do*?" she asked feeling stupid and confused.

"Well, have a look around and if you feel like you're drawn to a particular psychic then go and speak to them," Max prompted with an eager smile, her eyes now on a nearby clairvoyant who had a large display sign next to her table that claimed she was an experienced tarot reader. "I'm going to her," Max added pulling away from a bewildered El and leaving her in the middle of the busy, warm and smelly room.

"Shit," El mumbled under her breath as she looked around nervously. Slowly and unsurely, she started to wander around the room, trying not to catch anyone's eye when they looked up at her, clearly wanting to sell her some kind of crap.

She stopped near the back and ran a hand through her hair, staying stationary as her hazel eyes flickered around the room. Suddenly her gaze locked with kind green eyes and she startled for a moment, staring back at the psychic.

The woman gave her a warm smile but didn't prompt her to walk over or try and sell her anything. El quickly broke their gaze to look around again and noticed that every other psychic now had someone getting a reading. El wondered if that meant that this woman, Marcella Miller according to her sign, wasn't a very good psychic and so no one else wanted her.

El looked around again, clenching her fist anxiously, wanting to find *something* to do before looking back at Marcella and sighing in defeat. *Damn, looks like I'm getting a reading.*

"Good morning," Marcella greeted welcomingly as El hesitantly waded her way through the crowd towards the clairvoyant.

Good morning indeed. El had not appreciated her early wakeup call from Max so that they could get to this stupid fair early. She hadn't even managed to have her morning coffee damnit.

"Hi," El greeted awkwardly, standing just behind the empty seat facing the clairvoyant. Her clammy hands clenching slightly to the top of the chair.

Marcella watched her fingers and laughed gently looking back up at El, "I don't bite honey, why don't you sit down?"

El heaved a sigh and did as she was told, sitting down neatly and then keeping her fidgeting hands clasped together on her lap.

Marcella's table was covered in a black cloth with a purple and gold thin scarf laid on top of it with three different decks of intricately designed cards. "What's your name honey?" she asked while neatening up the cards.

"El," she answered lamely, looking down at her hands and then hesitantly looking back up at the clairvoyant.

"It's nice to meet you El. Now what reading are you after?"

El couldn't help but let a laugh escape her throat as she smiled slightly and shrugged her shoulders, "I honestly have no idea. I've never done this kind of thing before..."

"That's fine," Marcella smiled kindly, her eyes then flicking promptly to her decks of cards. "So, I read Angel, Oracle and Tarot cards. Angel cards work best if you want a *specific* question answering, Oracle cards are also good with answering questions but are a little more broad than specific. And tarot cards will show us whatever they sense from you. They are more reflective of what you might be seeking."

El bit down on the inside of her cheek to stop herself from laughing. It all just sounded so *crazy*. How could a bunch of cards know anything about her life?

"So, which would you like to try today?" Marcella asked intently, her green eyes wide with interest as she took El in.

"Um," El mumbled uncertainly as she eyed up the cards. "I guess the oracle ones?"

"Lovely," Marcella said happily as she reached for the oracle cards and handed them over to El. "If you wouldn't mind shuffling them to get your energy on them."

El suppressed a snort, *I'm more likely to get my sweat on them than my energy*. But nevertheless, she shuffled them as prompted.

"I want you to now think of a question or anything you would like answered by the cards," Marcella said in a soothing voice, making El feel as if she was going into a trance for a moment. She nodded and closed her eyes, trying to think of something constructive, but all her sceptical mind could come up with was *why am I here? What answers can you give me?*

El opened her eyes and handed the cards back over to Marcella who held the deck in the palm of her left hand. She carefully placed down the first card and turned it over. El took a peak at it and admired the beauty of an angel with their palms clasped together.

Marcella smiled and looked up at El, "I'm seeing that you're a very caring person. Both in your personal life and professional life. I'm sensing you're a nurse?"

El looked at Marcella in bewilderment, but didn't say anything else only nodding her head, slightly concerned this clairvoyant was stalking her. She then pulled out two more cards, one representing children and the other exclaiming about progress. "Ah," Marcella said knowingly, "would I be right in saying that you are wanting to progress in your field of work? That you're wanting to work with children?"

El gulped anxiously and nodded her head, her lips parting slightly in awe as she listened to Marcella, not understanding how she would know about El's wish to become a paediatrician.

And so the reading went on; family came up and Marcella told her to not feel so guilty about living away from her dad and that her mother was always guiding El from the spiritual world. Her heart clenched,

and she foolishly wiped at her tears, completely stunned that Marcella could possibly know her mom had passed away when she was a child.

El found herself laughing when the clairvoyant talked about positive strong forces in her life, like the fiery red head. She knew there was the possibility Marcella had seen her walk in with Max, but it was funny either way that supposedly the spirit world knew how much of a loose cannon her best friend was.

El could hardly believe how much time had passed when Marcella pulled out the last three cards. One was an intricately designed wheel with 'fate' written inside of it, another was an angel holding up an oracle ball with the words 'trust' and then the last card was a beautiful illustration of two angels holding each other in what looked like an intimate embrace, their large wings almost wrapping around them both, like they were in their own world, cocooned from everything else.

Marcella was grinning as she stared down at the card, a pleased and almost playful expression written over her face. She slowly looked up at El who was watching her inquisitorially and stated, "soulmates."

El's arched her eyebrow and laughed light heartedly. "Excuse me?"

Marcella looked back down at the cards, still smiling, if not brighter. "You're going to meet your soulmate soon. *Very* soon in fact. I'm seeing a hot drink, something almost *embarrassing* and an arch of flowers."

"Okay..." El snorted, going back to thinking this woman was a fraud. There was no way on earth El was going to meet her soulmate. After several failed dates she had resigned to the fact a long time ago that she was never going to meet Mr Right. He didn't *exist*.

Marcella smirked seeing El's hesitance and pointed her purple painted nail to the angel holding the oracle ball. "*Trust* the process and *trust* the cards El. This is your fate."

El smiled politely, proud of herself for not rolling her eyes, a trait she had picked up from Max who profusely stated she had got from one

of Lucas's best friends.

El thanked Marcella and paid for the reading, wandering around the room until Max was finally free. She was bursting to tell her everything about her angel card reading as they finally left the fair.

Max was still talking about her positive and uplifting reading when El dropped her back off at her dad's house. She was having lunch with her in laws, dad and stepmom while all El was planning on doing was finding the nearest coffee shop ASAP.

"Thanks for coming with me El," Max sighed happily as she squeezed her best friend in a warm hug. "I honestly feel so much better about everything."

"Good," El grinned and meant it. No matter what she personally thought of the reading and the Psychic Fair in general, if it had caused Max to leave with a smile on her face and a weight off her shoulders it was totally worth it.

El yawned loudly as she joined the queue for the small coffee shop she had found on her way back to the hotel. Her hazel eyes moved around the homely shop and she smiled, taking in the worn armchairs, the bookshelves and the smell of roasted coffee beans. Yes, this would do nicely for her afternoon before Max's bachelorette party that night.

The bridesmaids were already in California, Erica Lucas's sister and Max's two cousins Megan and Emma probably back at the hotel already getting themselves ready. El grinned to herself knowing it was going to be a wild night, especially with Max being the bride to be.

"Can I take your order mam?" the barista asked as El blinked and realised she was at the front of the queue.

"Yes, sorry," she said quickly apologising while her cheeks blushed. She didn't dare to turn around and look at the long line. "Can I have a medium chai latte to go please." El paid for her drink and waited patiently, watching the drink being made and thanking god that she

would finally get some much needed caffeine in her veins.

"There you go mam, have a nice day," the barista smiled as he handed over the drink.

"Thank you," El replied with a relieved smile, clutching the coffee cup and whirling around to leave the shop. The only problem was that when she turned around someone walked straight into her.

Everything seemed to happen in slow motion, she practically bounced into the person's chest, her coffee cup forced to cave in spilling hot coffee all down her sweater as El squealed from the warm liquid and jumped back from the person who was stuttering out a loud apology.

"Oh my *god!* I am so sorry, *shit*, I am so, *so sorry!* Are you okay?" two firm hands grabbed onto El's upper arms as the person tried to stop her from stumbling over.

"*Fuck*," El gasped as she looked down at her soaked sweater, wringing the material out and pulling it away from her body in a desperate attempt to save the tank top underneath.

"Are you okay?! Holy crap, I'm really sorry. I'm such a klutz."

El's huffed in frustration and went to snap, "do I *look* okay?!" but as she looked up at the offending person, her breath stuttered in her throat.

Hazel golden eyes met dark amber eyes, and she was gone. Completely head over heels in love. That whole love at first sight stuff? Yeah it was true. *Well, damn.*

"Er..." El choked out instead, her heart jumping into her throat and a million butterflies exploding to life in her stomach. She wanted to remain calm, act cool, but her gaze traitorously decided to look over this man. Her eyes taking in messy black hair, pale skin with freckles delicately placed over a long nose and sharp cheek bones. Her gaze fell onto plump almost red lips and she gulped.

"What um...what happened?" El asked confused, as she slowly lifted her eyes to meet those sparkling orbs of black stars glistening back at

her.

"Um..." he croaked unintelligently, before shaking his head slightly and clearing his throat, standing up a bit taller like he was trying to put himself back together. "I walked into you and..." he gestured to her sweater before blushing and averting his eyes. "I really am sorry, *please* let me buy you a new coffee."

El found she was blushing too and she quickly nodded her head, suddenly feeling bashful and keeping her gaze on her ruined grey sweater. "If you wouldn't mind that would be great, I'll just um... clean up." She said gesturing in the general direction of her sweater, feeling too breathless to think of a coherent sentence.

"Okay...cool," the man nodded, his Adam's apple bobbing as he shuffled from one foot to the other. "It was a medium chai latte right?"

El looked up at him, her eyebrows quirked in surprise, "how did you know that?"

"Oh," the man coughed embarrassed as he ran a hand through his already wild hair. El stared at it for a moment and felt the sudden urge, no *need* to run her fingers through it. "I heard you ordering," he mumbled, looking away and shrugging his shoulders nonchalantly.

"Right," El said awkwardly, stepping aside and thanking one of the baristas who had come over to clear up the spilt drink. "I'll just go try and dry off," she added in a hurry, not even looking up at the handsome man before rushing to the public restroom.

El hurried into the tiled bathroom and locked the door behind her, gasping for breath as she leaned her back against the cold wooden door. She closed her eyes, her chest heaving and her heart racing like never before. "Calm down," she whispered to herself feeling incredibly foolish.

She pushed away from the door, opening her eyes, pulling of her purse strap and tugging her wet sweater over her head, moaning in frustration when her curly hair got stuck on one of the buttons, making her brunette locks even more wild than usual.

El shivered in just her black tank top, her fingers fanning over the sweater material as she inspected the damage. It was pretty much ruined, and she sighed in exasperation as she tried to dry it off under the measly hand dryer.

"Great," El huffed knowing she was going to have to just stay in her tank top. She picked up her purse and bunched up sweater, taking a deep breath for courage and left the bathroom.

El practically jumped out of her skin when the moment she walked through the door she found the man of her dreams leaning against the opposite wall, holding two coffees and looking anxious.

He opened his mouth, probably to apologise again if the look in his eyes was anything to go by. But then his eyes landed on her tank top and he coughed awkwardly, looking away. "Here," he choked handing over one of the coffee cups. "Again, I am so sorry. If you want to send me the dry cleaning bill for your sweater I'll happily pay."

El looked at him and couldn't help but smile shyly, her heart tingling at how kind he was. "It was an accident," she told him with a slight shrug of her bare shoulder as she reached for the coffee cup. "Could have happened to anyone."

Their fingers brushed as she took the coffee cup and their eyes found each other, both of them inhaling a sharp breath at the electricity that ran up their arms and straight to their racing hearts, their chemistry exploding into technicolour. The man smiled bashfully, his pale cheeks turning a pretty pink.

"But of course, it was me," he said with a gentle laugh that made El grin because the noise was so bright and wonderful. "I'm gonna blame the jet lag. I'm not from around here," he explained with a lopsided grin.

El giggled, startling herself as to why she was feeling so giddy. She tried to brush off her embarrassment with a smile and looked back up into those captivating dark eyes. "I can't really use jet lag as an excuse. I live in San Francisco."

"Oh that's cool," the man said with a nervous smile as El started to slowly move away from the bathroom and the man pushed back from the wall he had been leaning on and walked sheepishly next to her. "Is the Golden Gate Bridge as good as they make it sound?"

El shrugged, feeling oddly comfortable next to this man as they walked towards the exit, both of them unconsciously stepping very slowly, not wanting this moment to end. "It's pretty spectacular, when people aren't using it to end their life of course..." *Shit why am I talking about that?!*

"Oh right...okay," the man said, clearing his throat and making El want the ground to swallow her up because of course she was *this* awkward around men. Especially *this* man, but that might be more to do with the fact she was head over heels in love with him.

They were making their way begrudgingly to the door and El tried desperately to think of something intelligent or charming to say, but every time she opened her mouth, she shut it again.

There was just *something* about him. Something that made her brain turn to mush, something that made her stomach jump and twist and her heart race so fast she thought it might burst out of her chest.

El watched as the man opened the door of the coffee shop, the bell tinkling above the frame as they both stepped out into the cooler air.

She couldn't help the shiver that ran down her spine at the slight breeze and she rubbed her arms where a few goose bumps had raised. She always felt the cold, even in California.

El didn't realise that the man had been watching her in concern and then hesitation as he stumbled to pull off his own blue sweater, leaving a polo shirt underneath. "Here," he said with a shy smile, his eyes gentle and insisting as he pushed his sweater towards El who stared at him in surprise. "It's the least I can do," he added with a bashful smile.

El swallowed nervously, her hand carefully reaching out for the sweater and her fingers grasping at the warm cotton. "Thank you," she told in almost a whisper, her heart back in her throat all over

again, making it hard to even form words.

"You're welcome," he said quietly back, his eyes sparkling with warmth as he stared right back at her.

El carefully pulled the sweater on, inhaling sharply at how incredible it smelt. She knew secretly she would be smelling the collar the *second* the man was out of sight. She looked back up at him and found he was smiling, his eyes light and almost pleased with her wearing his sweater.

*Ask for his number. Shit, ask for his **name**!* But as El went to open her mouth someone else stepped out of the coffee shop and she and the man had to both step backwards to let the person pass them.

El felt her cheeks blushing and she fumbled for words again, "I should um probably go..." she said hesitantly.

"Yeah," the man sighed with a begrudging look in his eyes. "Me too. I'm meant to be going out tonight," he said with a slight eye roll that looked *way* too familiar. "Not that I can really keep up with my friends on a good day," he said with a gentle laugh that once again had El beaming, because he was so goddamn *beautiful* and it was making her lose her mind.

"Okay...well um, t-thank you for the sweater..." El said pulling at the long sleeve, feeling bashful and coy as she dipped her head and looked up at the man through her long lashes.

He blushed and shrugged his broad shoulders that looked even more prominent in his thin polo shirt. "It's no problem. I'm sorry for making you lose your sweater...*wait*, shit that sounded wrong!" the man exclaimed, running a hand over his face, cringing while El laughed light and airy.

He looked at her in surprise and then a bashful grin curved on his already perfect lips. They continued to stare at each other until El sighed heavily, realising that she really did need to get going if she was going to make it to the bachelorette party on time.

"It was nice to meet you," El said grinning as she slowly started to

back away.

"You too," he smiled wide and cheerfully in return as he copied her, backing away from her, his eyes staying on hers until he knocked into someone, apologised profusely and looked back at El in embarrassment. She laughed, feeling like she was no longer tethered by gravity as she gave him a little teasing wave and turned around.

When she got to the end of the street El couldn't help but glance back, blushing when she saw that the man had done the same. They shared a bashful smile and looked away.

"What do you *mean* you didn't get his number?!" Max practically screamed, her words slightly slurred as she and El took their fifth shot.

They were dressed to the nines, Max looking stunning in a short skater style white dress, a veil and plastic tiara on her head and a sash across her chest. They were all sat in a VIP booth at the club, bobbing their heads to the loud beat of the music and getting through their rounds of shots.

"Not even his *name*!" El exclaimed in almost a sob, her voice filled with regret. "What the hell was I *thinking* Max? This could have been my *guy*!"

"You're an idiot," Erica said wisely, tutting slightly.

El sighed and Max shouted, "Erica! This is my girl we're talking about."

"Just stating a fact..." Erica mumbled as she downed a shot.

"No, she's right," El sighed playing with the empty shot glass. "I *am* an idiot. He was *perfect*..." She couldn't help but pout, her chin in her palm as she tried to ask herself why she didn't ask for his number, even his *name* would have been a start!

"Yeah spilling hot coffee over you, sounds *perfect* to me..." Erica teased with sass as she chinked shot glasses with Max's cousins who laughed giddily. El rolled her eyes but didn't respond.

Max turned to El and grinned, her eyes slightly glazed over and her cheeks flushed with intoxication. "I've just had the *best* idea!"

El couldn't help but groan, knowing that Max's 'best idea' schemes usually ended in humiliation and almost getting arrested.

"I'm gonna set you up with Lucas's best man Mike. He's single too and I actually think he'd be your type."

El cringed and shook her head, "the maid of honour and the best man? Isn't that a bit cliché?" she asked wearily, knowing she didn't even have a *heart* to give to another man, coffee man had stolen it.

"Isn't finding the love of your life in a coffee shop a little cliché?" Max teased back, nudging El's shoulder whilst she blushed.

"Okay fair enough," she mumbled, conceding that yes it was a little cliché, but she couldn't help the feeling that had exploded inside of her when she looked into his eyes. It was like everything had suddenly come to life, like she had been living in black and white.

"Just give Mike a chance," Max pressed on, her warm palm over the back of El's hand, as she gave her best friend a wide grin, her drunken state making her more excitable than usual. El couldn't say no to that face.

"Okay," she sighed smiling slightly.

"That's my girl!" Max cheered before wobbling to her feet. "Right ladies let's dance! I'm getting married in two days and after that, I'm never wearing heels and a fucking dress again!"

El and the girls all laughed, getting to their feet with amused smiles on their faces as they linked arms and were led by the bride to be onto the dance floor. For the rest of the evening El tried to put coffee man and this Mike to the back of her mind. She focused on her best friend, dancing and spinning Max around and grinning like a fool, because in two days her soul sister was getting married and it would be the *perfect* day.

"I swear to god, if my mom asks me to wear that ugly bracelet *one*

more time..." Max muttered while the make-up artist worked in between the red head's rants and mumbles.

"I think she wants it to be your something old," El reasoned, holding Max's glass of champagne as she stood next to her chair, her own hair and make-up already done. All of the bridesmaids had their hair swept up into a messy side bun with floral baby's breath tucked in at the top of the wisps of hair. "She said it belonged to your grandma..."

"Eurgh I hated my grandma and she hated me," Max shuddered, making the make-up artist sigh slightly as she tried again to carefully put lipstick on the impatient bride.

"I hope you're not talking about Dotty," El reprimanded pointing the champagne flute at Max. "I love that woman."

"No," the red head grinned slightly. "I'm talking about my *mom's* mom, not my dad's mom. Grandma Mary is a witch."

"Well you don't *have* to wear the bracelet," El reasoned as she picked up her own champagne flute and took a sip.

"I'm not going to," Max muttered, and then a soft smile lit up her face. "Besides, Lucas has already bought me one. Mike brought it over this morning when you were getting your make up done."

"Ah the elusive Mike," El laughed softly, shaking her head as she remembered Max's plans to get El and the best man together. She grinned and nodded her head as if interested when her best friend exclaimed how brilliant her plan was, but El still hadn't gotten over coffee man. And she didn't think she ever would. Those dark amber eyes had appeared in her dreams for the past two nights now.

"It's gonna happen," Max teased as she reached for her champagne flute, El handed it over immediately. "I can see it now. Mike and El. El and Mike. Has a nice ring to it don't you think?"

El sighed, begrudgingly admitting that it did have a nice ring to it. For some reason it made her chest feel warm and for her skin to tingle.

The next few hours flew by in the shape of mini meltdowns from

Max, a stuck zipper on Erica's dress and a lost button hole. But finally, the girls were making their way down to the beach. Max holding onto her father Greg for dear life, her body physically trembling from nerves and excitement.

She looked stunning in a simple white mermaid style gown. The bottom of the dress moving slightly in the gentle breeze. El beamed with happiness and pride, feeling so blessed to even be a witness to her best friend's wedding, let alone have such a big role in it.

A large white screen had been put up so that the girls and Greg could get down to the beach without being seen by the wedding guests, the groom and his groomsmen.

"Remember, after the ceremony is over, me and Lucas will walk back up the aisle, then you and Mike, Erica and Dustin, Megan and Will, and Emma with Lucas's cousin Jack." Max said to the bridal party when they reached the white screen, turning around to look at the girls.

"What does Mike look like?" El whispered back, her own heart racing with adrenaline at the thought of having to walk down the aisle first.

"You can't miss him. He's as tall as a giraffe, dark floppy hair and kind of a dork." Max turned to look at her cousins, "Megs Will is the shortest one, he's got brown hair and he'll probably be the only one *not* gawking at you all because he's gay." Megan laughed in amusement and nodded. "Emma, you already met Jack at the hotel, right?"

Emma smirked, "I sure did..." while Greg pretended he didn't hear his niece's suggestive words.

Erica shuddered, "gross. That's my cousin you're talking about." The girls all giggled and it seemed to ease the building tension for a moment.

The wedding planner hurried back over to the bridal party and smiled brightly, "are you ready?" she asked Max who took a deep breath and nodded nervously.

El felt her own stomach swooping with a mixture of excitement, fear and happiness. She reached for Max's hand, giving it a supportive squeeze before the music started to play and her best friend gave her the go ahead to walk into sight and make her way up the aisle.

Everyone had stood up and for a moment El couldn't see Lucas or his groomsmen. She tried to smile through her nerves, clutching her bouquet of wild flowers tightly between her grasp as she slowly made her way up the aisle towards a beautiful floral arch, Lucas and his groomsmen finally coming into view...

*"You're going to meet your soulmate soon. **Very** soon in fact. I'm seeing a hot drink, something almost **embarrassing** and an arch of flowers."*

Hazel eyes and amber eyes once again connected, widening in united shock, surprise and happiness. El gasped quietly, trying to carry on walking, her body moving of its own accord as she looked at her coffee man, *Mike*.

He looked just as startled to see her, his handsome face a picture of shock, his jaw slack and awed before his face lit up and his lips curved into a wide dreamy grin. They continued to stare at each other, El not even realising she was smiling just as foolishly, her heart practically audible.

She reached the floral arch and looked bashfully over at Mike just as he mouthed, "hi," to her. El's took a deep calming breath, grinning at him, their eyes completely glued on each other until the music changed and they both hurried to look at the arrival of the bride.

El felt like she was in a daze, her senses completely overloaded with how stunning and happy Max looked as she glided up the aisle with her father. How awed Lucas was by her, his eyes wet and adoring of his wife to be. And the shock and overwhelming fate of Mike being her coffee man, of him continuing to stare at her throughout the ceremony, a bashful smile lifting his pretty lips every time she caught him looking.

The ceremony went by in a flurry of happiness and laughter, and the occasional tear as Lucas and Max became husband and wife. El and every single guest clapped loudly, all of them so immensely happy for

the newlyweds.

The music lifted once more, the bride and groom kissing and then holding hands tightly as they walked down the white carpet that was keeping the ground mostly free of sand.

El's heart was jumping with ecstasy and her stomach was a flurry of butterflies when Mike stepped forward, his arm outstretched for hers.

She grinned at him, taking his arm and trying not to squeal at the way his warm form felt against her own. They started to walk but El couldn't help but look up at Mike.

"Hello coffee man," she teased making them both laugh. "I didn't expect to see you here."

"Me neither," Mike replied, his smile incredibly tender and his eyes soft, and dare she say loving. "But I'm glad I have seen you," he added breathlessly, their eyes connecting.

"If this isn't fate I don't know what is," El whispered, courage lifting her heart and making her feel braver than she usually would be.

Mike's eyes lit up with happiness, "whatever it is, I *trust* it."

El's gaze danced over his face in adoration before meeting the beautiful dark amber eyes once more. She felt like she could see everything in those starry orbs, like she could see a future, *their* future all wrapped up in his gaze, endless possibilities. Their wedding, a family, the laughs of innocent children and the happy sighs of tired parents. A future of their own, a future joined *together*.

"Trust the process and trust the cards El. This is your fate."

"I trust it too," El replied breathlessly.

And as they continued to glance at each other, sharing bashful smiles and blushing cheeks, before talking together, getting to know one another and finally dancing. Slowly, safe and complete in each other's arms as they stared into the eyes that had started their connection.

It was in the cards and it was in their lips meeting half way as they

kissed, fireworks going off in their hearts, both of them knowing that *this* was *it*. They had found their soulmates and they had let fate choose their destiny.

AN: Are you all still alive after that fluff feast?! I hope so, because I'll be back tomorrow with a new theme! :-D

I love you all, thank you so much for reading! Please leave a comment or a kudos (or both haha) if you enjoyed this one shot.

3. Back To You

Back to You

AN: It's Day 3 of Mileven Week and today's theme is High School Reunion.

I am sorry if this one seems a little rushed. I had a really busy day and wanted to get this one out to you, because I honestly love this theme!

I hope you enjoy it

The sun was at its highest point when El got the call. The heat beating against the glass windows of her office as her cell phone vibrated against the oak desk, moving slightly on the paper notepad El had just dropped it on to check an email on her iMac.

She glanced down expecting to see a private number from one of the organisations she worked with as a social worker. She was not however expecting the contact *Will Byers* to flash up.

El's eyebrows arched in confusion. She hadn't seen Will Byers in over 13 years, only having his number because her smart phone had synced contact details from Facebook.

She hesitated to pick up the call, a frown creasing her brow, wondering why he was calling her now. Curiosity won her over and before she knew it, she was holding her smartphone, sliding her finger across the screen to accept the call and placing it to her ear.

"Hello?" El answered, trying to clear her throat which seemed oddly dry. She didn't know *why* she was suddenly so nervous. Her and Will had always got on so well when El lived in Hawkins, they were even best friends. But in freshman year El had to move to California to live with her dad Jim Hopper after her mom passed away.

It had changed everything. Losing her mom had caused a wound so deep inside of her, leaving her childhood home and her friends,

learning to live with the father she had never really known. But most of all, leaving *him* behind. Even just thinking about him filled El's mind with flashes of dark amber eyes, freckled cheeks and dark messy hair.

"El!" Will greeted in surprise at her picking up the call before laughing lightly. "You literally sound exactly like you did 14 years ago!"

El couldn't help but grin, "and you sound *nothing* like you did 14 years ago."

"Ah, I think my voice was still breaking when I last saw you," Will said with amusement.

The call was light and tension free, nothing like El had been expecting after so long. In a way it was like no time had passed at all.

"So what are you up to El? Are you still in California?"

"Yes still in California. I'm actually at work right now, I'm a social worker."

"A social worker? El that's amazing!" Will complimented before hesitating. "Oh...should I not be calling you right now? Are you free to talk?"

El couldn't help but chuckle, Will was clearly excited about *something* and his enthusiasm was catching. "No I'm free to talk. I'm in my office," she explained while her eyes wandered around the room assigned to her.

She had a few personal touches, an Eggo stress ball, a framed photo of her mom, another of El and her dad. But nothing that would elude to her having her own family or partner, because of course that part of her life was non-existence. El resisted the urge to sigh and instead shuffled slightly in her desk chair repositioning herself.

"Wow your own office, check *you* out!" Will teased while El rolled her eyes in amusement.

"So what have you been up to Will?" She couldn't help but ask with

interest. While she followed Will on Facebook, accepting his friend request a year ago, neither of them did more than liking the occasional status.

Will's Facebook page was filled with either photos of him and his boyfriend Damien or pieces of art he had masterly created.

El's Facebook page was mainly memes of cats.

"Not much, I live in New York with my boyfriend Damien now and I'm managing an art studio," Will said happy before coughing slightly awkwardly. El's eyes narrowed with suspicion wondering what he was going to say next.

"The reason I'm actually calling though is because Jennifer Hayes, remember Jennifer Hayes? She had a crush on me until I told her I was gay. Well she's set up a Facebook event for a 10 year Hawkins high school reunion back home. She said we could invite guests, I'm obviously bringing Damien...but I wondered if you wanted to come too?"

El's breath stuttered in her chest and she worried her lower lip between her teeth. "Back to Hawkins?" She asked hesitantly.

"Yeah," Will answered in such a way that El could tell he was smiling. "Look I know high school reunions are kind of lame, but I thought it would be good for the old party to get back together, *including* you."

El couldn't help but be flattered that Will had thought to invite her, after all she had finished high school in California and not at the Hawkins school she originally started in with her friends.

Those dark amber eyes flashed into her mind again and El played with the hem of her blouse nervously. "Is...um, are *all* of the party going?" She wanted to ask about him *without* singling him out. El hoped she was going with nonchalance but even she heard the waver in her voice.

If Will heard it he was diplomatic enough not to say anything. "Yeah Dustin lives in Hawkins still so he's coming, and Lucas and Mike are flying in..."

El's heart jumped into her throat at the mention of his name. They had been childhood sweethearts, best friends for as long as she could remember, until they turned 12 and that relationship turned into a pure and innocent romance.

She remembered their first kiss in the cafeteria, Mike thinking he was cool for sneaking them in there after AV club, but his nerves showing through when he leaned in to kiss her. She remembered their first dance at the Snow Ball, how butterflies had tickled her stomach when they danced close. She remembered every bike ride, every lace of their fingers, every kiss, every smile and the heart wrenching pain of telling him she was moving away, *nothing* more crushing than the look in his expressive eyes.

Mike was her childhood sweetheart, her *first* love. And she had never forgotten that.

"El?"

She startled, jumping slightly in her chair, hardly realising she had been daydreaming while Will had asked her a question.

He chuckled and repeated himself, "I was asking if you'll come? I know we would *all* love to see you again."

El flinched slightly at the way Will said "all". She knew there was more to that statement, he was scheming something. "I mean I'd have to fly in..." she mumbled hesitantly, working the hem of her blouse between her fingers again.

"You've got vacation time though right?" Will said eagerly. "Come on Ellie, it'll be so much fun! Just like old times."

El grinned to herself, her hearting warming at being called Ellie again by Will. It was a long time since she had heard that nickname. Her hazel eyes flickered to the frame of her mom, to her dad and then onto her stress ball. These were literally her memories of the last 14 years. She had been surviving, but not really living.

"Could I bring a friend?" El hurried to ask, her mind already thinking of ways in which she could persuade her best and only friend Max to

come along.

"Yeah of course you can," Will said brightly and El could practically feel him grinning down the phone. "So, is that a yes then?"

El inhaled sharply through her nose, speaking a "yes," on the exhale.

"Yes! El this is so exciting!" Will called jubilantly. "Just give me five minutes and I'll send you the Facebook invite, okay?"

"Okay," E choked, already regretting her decision as she ran her fingers through her curly waves.

"Well I best let you get back to work. But I'll call you tomorrow and we can discuss plans for Hawkins. The guys are going to be so excited!"

El smiled sheepishly and nodded her head even though Will wasn't there to see it. "I'll...look forward to it," she said forcing her voice not to break with nerves.

"Me too," Will said breezily. "Bye El! Talk soon."

"Bye Will," El swallowed nervously, slowly bringing the smart phone away from her ear and ending the call.

Her breathing was harsh and her heart was racing as the reality of what she had just done set in.

She was going to the Hawkins high school reunion and *Mike* would be there! Mike, her childhood sweetheart, first and only love. The guy who no other man seemed to be able to compare to.

Her phone dinged and El's eyes shot down to look at it, staring at the Facebook notification for a moment before tapping it open.

*Will Byers has invited you to **Hawkins 10 Year High School Reunion.***

El bit her lip as her thumb hovered over the accept and decline options. She felt anxious, her head pounding with endless possibilities and her heart aching with feelings that she had long ago buried deep.

She took a deep breath and with a surge of courage pressed the accept option.

El dropped her phone back onto the desk and covered her face in her clammy palms. She was *going* to the Hawkins high school reunion and *Mike* would be there.

Holy shit she was gonna have to buy a dress.

El groaned when she thought of the more pressing matter as she picked up her smart phone.

She was going to have to convince her fiery, mischievous and stubborn best friend that she wanted to fly out of state to a reunion of a high school she had never been to. At the end of the day El needed her and Max had never let her down yet.

Mike was stuck in a traffic jam, tapping his hand on the steering wheel in frustration. He just *had* to leave the hospital on his lunch hour to buy that bacon and cheese croissant he was obsessed with.

The snow was hitting the windscreen and Mike sighed as he flicked on the wipers, wishing he was somewhere warm and sunny as he turned the AC onto its hottest setting.

He jumped slightly as his smart phone started to ring, the 'Star Wars' theme tune playing through the Bluetooth built in system as Mike glanced at the touchscreen to see it was Will calling.

He pressed a control on his steering wheel and the call connected.

"Hey Will," Mike said with a fleeting smile as he kept his eyes on the snowy windscreen.

"Hey Mike," Will responded cheerfully, his voice light and playful. Almost *too* playful.

"Look I've only got ten minutes left of my lunch break so I'm gonna cut to the chase. What are you doing November 10th?"

Mike laughed in surprise, a bemused expression on his face. "Um,

nothing I think? It's the weekend, right?" he asked in confusion, thinking of how his usual weekend plans consisted of pigging out on take-out food and binge watching Netflix.

"Yeah four weeks away. So, plenty of time to book flights," Will mused happily while Mike frowned, his eyes set on the traffic that was now moving slowly.

"Why would I need to book a flight?"

Will heaved a sigh, "look I know you're immediately going to say no. But hear me out okay?"

"Okay..." Mike laughed, half suspicious and half curious by his best friend's vague and unusual demeanour.

"We're all going to the Hawkins high school reunion," Will blurted out in an excited frenzy.

Mike blanched and shook his head resolutely, "nope. That's not hap –"

"Hey!" Will called, "I asked for you to hear me out."

Mike rolled his eyes, as if he would ever want to go back to high school and be stuck in a hot room with the people who had practically ignored him, Will, Lucas and Dustin for four years. If they weren't being ignored, then they were being bullied by Troy or teased by the cheerleaders for being a bunch of "nerdy virgins". Yeah of course Mike would be jumping at the chance to relive *that* experience...

"Lucas and Dustin have already confirmed they are going, *I'm* going, and I thought it would be a nice reunion for us all," Will said in a gentle voice, trying to appease Mike with his annoyingly lovable nature.

"Well can't we just hang out at my parents' house like normal?" Mike whined, huffing out a breath. "Or the arcade? Jesus even hanging out in Melvard's would be better than *this*."

Will cleared his throat, "there's um, there's something else I need to

tell you." He took a deep breath while Mike narrowed his eyes expecting the worst. He was thankful that he was getting closer now to the hospital where he worked as a Biomedical Engineer.

"El's coming."

Mike's eyes sprang open wide and in reflex his foot hit the break, causing the car behind him to beep the horn loudly and throw him a rude hand gesture. Mike's pale cheeks flushed with colour and he sheepishly raised his hand in apology to the other vehicle while Will shouted, "what the hell was that?! Are you okay?"

"Yeah, I'm..." Mike croaked, shaking his head, trying to rid it of the million memories that flooded back into place like they had never been gone. Her smile, her infectious laugh, the way she looked at him over her shoulder when she started to walk into class after he had dropped her off. The feel of her lips against his, soft, perfect...

Mike gulped, his hands gripping the steering wheel tightly. "Y-You... you said *El's* coming?"

"Yup."

Mike's brow etched with confusion as he blinked rapidly. "How would she even know about this? She was only with us until the middle of Freshman year."

God how he remembered it well, the way his heart cracked at seeing her grieve her mother and the way it completely splintered open when she cried telling him she was moving to California.

They thought they could make it work. But they were 14, young and foolish. Social media wasn't as much of a big thing as it was now, and Mike had even tried to find her on Facebook when he was 16 and joined the site, but it was no use.

Will heaved a heavy breath down the phone, "*well*, El knew about the reunion because I told her. I invited her..."

"*You* invited her?!" Mike spluttered, his eyes still comically large. He groaned, trying to get his racing heart under control as his stomach tightened in a knot. "Will is this about what I said at Nancy and

Jonathan's wedding?"

"You cried Mike!"

"I was *drunk*!"

"The truth comes out when you're drunk," Will said wisely before adding, "you cried saying how she was the only girl you ever loved and that no one else was *El*. That you wished it was *your* wedding day and she was your bride."

Mike cringed, heat creeping up his neck in embarrassment as he shuffled slightly in his seat. "That was like *6 months ago*. And she's... she's probably married or something," he mumbled feeling his heart ache and jealousy rise in his body at the idea of someone else getting to marry El.

"Mike," Will said sternly. "She's single."

Mike's heart raced but he couldn't help frowning as he indicated into the hospital staff parking lot. "How do you know that?"

"I've got her on Facebook and it was kind of obvious when I called her. She didn't say she would need to check *any* plans and she asked if she could bring a friend. Not a boyfriend, not a husband. Oh, and she's a social worker now."

Mike felt himself smiling, a pride filling in his chest as he realised that El had achieved the dream she had always wanted. He remembered how they lay in a blanket fort he had made for them in his basement, both of them talking about the future.

"I want to help children," El had said breathlessly, her eyes shining even brighter in the reflection of the fairy lights Mike had strung at the roof of the fort. "I want to be a social worker."

"You would be really great at that," Mike had answered, smiling softly as he gazed at El next to him, his heart and soul captivated by her.

She turned her head to look at him, a pretty pink blush in her cheeks. "You think?" she whispered. "I don't feel like I'm smart enough..."

"El, you are the smartest person I know."

*El giggled and rolled her eyes in amusement, "you have to say that. You're my **boyfriend**."*

*Mike had grinned, his 13-year-old heart filling with happiness and pride. "I don't **have** to say that. It's true."*

"Promise?" El whispered shuffling closer to Mike, her eyes dancing over his face as his heart jumped into his throat.

"Promise," he responded seriously before they both leaned in and shared a sweet kiss that lit Mike up from the tips of his toes to the top of his messy black hair.

"Anyway, El's really excited to come and reunite with us all," Will said encouragingly while Mike's stomach swooped with nerves.

"She is?" he asked hesitantly as he pulled into a space.

*"Sure!" Will answered a little too quickly before coughing uncomfortably, "I *might* have told her that you already confirmed you're coming..."*

"What?!" Mike yelped as he turned the engine off. "Will what the hell?!"

*"Sorry," Will said chuckling and not sounding like he was sorry in the *slightest*. "It's just I knew the moment I told you El was coming to the reunion you would be sure to come too."*

Mike sighed heavily and unbuckled his seatbelt, reaching over to the passenger seat to grab his work bag. "You haven't got some crazy plan to try and make something happen between me and her? Do you?" he asked suspiciously, his dark amber eyes narrowing.

Will laughed, "I doubt I'll need to plan anything. The moment you two look at each other that'll be it anyway. You were always sickly sweet together."

Mike pinched the bridge of his nose, "yeah well...that was a different life."

"Bullshit," Will scoffed. "I know you're still in love with her Mike and you should have heard the way she froze up when I mentioned you."

Mike swallowed nervously, his Adam's Apple bobbing. "She froze up?"

"Totally. Just say you'll come to the reunion Mike, I have a really great feeling about this. And you know how my intuition is usually right."

Mike sighed heavily, looking at the clock on his car display and knowing he needed to get a move on. If it was because he was on a time limit or because the mention of El suddenly made him feel impulsive. "Okay," he choked out breathlessly. "I'll go."

"Yes!" Will cheered happily. "You've made the right decision, this is going to be one unforgettable night."

"I hope for the right reasons," Mike muttered as he opened the door of his car and grabbed his phone out of the holder. "Look Will I'm back at work now, I've gotta go."

"Okay," Will answered happily, clearly proud of himself for his plan working. "We'll discuss what you're gonna wear to the reunion later."

Mike snorted in amusement, putting the phone to his ear as he got out of the car. "What's wrong with how I dress?"

"Nothing," Will said noncommittally.

"Will, friends *don't* lie."

"Fine," his best friend sighed. "You look like your mom is still dressing you!"

Mike rolled his hands, "right I'm hanging up now. Talk to you later."

Will just got out a chuckling goodbye before Mike disconnected the call and put his phone in his work bag. He headed into the hospital, biting his lip and unable to stop the heavy feeling that had spread from his chest and into his stomach.

He was going to the Hawkins high school reunion, and after 14 years he was going to see El.

El. His childhood sweetheart, the only girl he had ever truly loved. The girl who had broken his heart when she had to leave and the girl he had *never* forgotten about.

Holy shit he wasn't prepared.

"I can't believe we actually *came* to this," Lucas mumbled moodily from where he stood in the corner of the large ballroom with an excited Will, Damien and a nervous fidgeting Mike. He was wearing a light blue sweater over a white button up collared shirt and black slacks.

He went from standing tall, to stuffing his hands in his pockets every 30 seconds or so as he looked around the room. There was a large tacky sign saying, ***Hawkins Class of '08 Reunion*** and photo boards with images from the year book. A DJ booth was at one end of the room in front of a white sparkling dance floor and the bar and buffet table on the opposite end. Circular tables with crisp white cloths were scattered everywhere. And in the corner stood the AV club, feeling just as alienated as they did in high school. The cliques had soon found their people and were happily reuniting. Cheerleaders, jocks, you name it.

"It's going to be worth it," Will said happily, his green eyes eagerly looking around the room, glancing at the entrance more times than anywhere else.

"Yeah maybe for Mike but not for me," Lucas sighed, leaning back against the wall.

Mike blushed and ran a hand through his hair, "the last time El saw me I was a gangly 14-year-old nerd, maybe she's not into that kind of thing anymore..." he mumbled in a reprimanding tone.

Lucas smirked, "you're now a gangling 28-year-old nerd. I see no difference." The boys shoved each other playfully just as Dustin walked back over to the party, carefully holding a tray of shots and a

single orange juice.

"That must have cost you a *fortune*!" Will gasped as all of the boys stared down at the numerous shot glasses while Dustin carefully placed the tray down on the empty table next to them.

He whirled around to look at his friends, a proud smile on his face. "Nope, it didn't cost *me* anything."

"Oh god what did you do?" Mike groaned wondering if they were going to get chucked out before he could even *see* El.

"Remember bitch Stacey who I used to have a crush on?" Dustin said eagerly while the party members nodded, Damien just listening on in amusement.

"Well she turned into a *total* gold digger. Have you seen her husband? He's *ancient*." Dustin discreetly pointed to a grey-haired man who was looking bored next to Stacey, the prom queen they had hardly recognised because of all of the Botox. Whatever natural beauty she used to have was long gone now.

"Shit," Lucas mumbled, his eyes wide. "I thought someone had brought their dad as a guest!"

"The poor guy," Dustin sighed shaking his head before looking back at the boys. "*Anyway*, I put these shots on Stacey's tab. I thought the least she could do was buy us a drink."

The party all laughed and grabbed shot glasses. "Well I can certainly drink to that," Mike mused.

"Cheers to me for not marrying that troll," Dustin said happily, lifting his shot glass.

"Cheers!" Mike, Lucas, Will and Damien laughed as they all chinked glasses and threw back the harsh alcohol.

"God the line for the bathroom was *ridiculously* long," came the slightly frustrated voice of Dustin's wife Laura, causing the boys to turn to look at her. "You would think those women were 13-year-old girls the way they were hogging the mirrors. I told them, I'm

pregnant, I actually need to pee."

"My lady has returned!" Dustin beamed as he put his arms around Laura, kissing her lips lovingly as she smiled against his mouth. His hand moved down to her protruding bump. They were expecting their first baby, a boy who was due in four months.

"God you two are so cute," Lucas sighed, grabbing a second shot glass and downing the contents. "It's not fair," he added before wiping his mouth with the sleeve of his jacket.

Lucas had been in a long-term relationship up until two months earlier and he was only starting to get out of the post breakup blues.

"You'll find someone," Dustin pointed at him, a meaningful expression on his face.

"Yeah," Mike said with reproach, a kind smile on his lips as he faintly heard the next song start to play through the ballroom. *Back to You* by Selena Gomez. "The right girl is out there *somewhere*."

"Coming from the guy whose still in love with his childhood sweetheart..."

"I am *not* in lo – "

Mike was suddenly shoved by Will, who excitedly pointed towards the entrance to the ballroom of the hotel. His dark eyes followed Will's extended arm and then his breath stuttered to a stop. In fact, he was sure he had stopped breathing *completely*.

Walking into the room was *El*.

Mike's jaw dropped to the floor. While he knew it was her in an instance, ethereal beauty like hers *never* faded. But she was a *woman* now. Her svelte curves teased into a soft pink skater dress, her curly hair much longer, falling gracefully down her bare shoulders and her face thinner, her lips more pronounced and her eyes even more *captivating*.

"I think Mike's died," Dustin whispered.

Mike watched completely overwhelmed and mesmerised as El looked nervously around before slowly, so very slowly her gaze found his, and they *locked*. Mike's heart exploded into life as the depths of her golden hazel eyes felt like they were reaching into his soul.

And in that moment, Mike knew he had fallen in love with El all over again.

El and Max had ample time to get ready for the reunion that was taking place downstairs in the hotel they were staying at, and yet they were both running late.

Max was straightening her ever so slightly wavy red hair, wearing a tightly fitted black jumpsuit while El kept nervously catching her reflection in the floor length mirror.

"Do you think I should wear the Bridget Jones underwear?" El asked anxiously as her clammy palms moved against her dress covered stomach. "They will hide any lumps and bumps."

Max rolled her eyes, keeping her focus on the straighteners. "You don't *have* any lumps and bumps! The only bumps you have are boobs and an ass."

El groaned and then went to nervously fidgeting with the hem of the pink skater style dress. "Do you think this dress is too short?" It hit mid-thigh and combined with the cream heels, making her legs look twice as long.

"No," Max answered adamantly, glancing over at El. "You look totally hot and this Mike guy is gonna die."

El sighed impatiently and walked over to Max, "he's *not* going to die."

Max shrugged, "his jaw's gonna hit the floor at a minimum. You look beautiful El," she said glancing at her best friend and smiling.

El grinned reaching for Max's hand and giving it a gentle squeeze. "Thank you for coming here with me," she whispered, feeling unbelievably grateful.

Max laughed and turned the straighteners off. "A free trip out of Cali courtesy of El Hopper and a weekend with my best friend and trying to play matchmaker. Sign me up any day!"

El rolled her eyes playfully and grabbed her purse. "Maybe I should set *you* up."

Max snorted and adjusted her bra pushing up her cleavage until she was content with how they looked in the jump suit. "Oh *please*, like any man could ever handle *me*."

The girls laughed, linking arms and leaving the hotel room, taking the elevator down to the lobby in comfortable silence. But the closer they got to the ballroom, the more nerves flickered in El's stomach like building flames.

She was going to see Mike. *Mike*. She could barely believe it.

Noticing the anxiety rippling over El's face, Max grabbed her hands. "Hey, it's gonna be okay. You might not even *like* him anymore, everyone changes when they get older. But either way, he was your friend too, right? And this Will, Lucas and Dustin you told me about. So, you're gonna have a great night either way with your friend. Including *me*."

"You're right," El sighed breathlessly before pulling Max into a hug. "God, I love you."

Max laughed, a teasing and sympathetic look on her face as she pressed her hand to her chest. "El, I'm *flattered* but I'm not into girls."

"Oh, *hush* you," El laughed smacking Max in the arm, both of them grinning with amusement as the elevator doors dinged open and they walked out into the lobby, heading towards where they could hear the beat of music.

"Oh *Jesus* they're playing Selena Gomez," Max muttered as they moved towards a set of golden brown doors.

"Hey! I *love* Selena Gomez."

"Oh please, you're just upset that Justin went and married Hailey."

"Jelena was endgame Max!"

Max rolled her eyes and pushed open the doors, walking in first while El hesitated slightly as the room came into view. Her breath caught in her chest as she looked around at the decorated space, mostly filled with strangers now. She could make out a few faces, like Jennifer Hayes who had always been sweet in elementary school and that bitch Stacey, *oh god was that Stacey?! What happened to her face?!*

El moved further into the room and she stopped, looking around nervously, feeling her heart start to beat loudly as the feeling of someone staring at her filled her senses. She swallowed nervously, just knowing he was in the room. She needed to find him.

And there he was, staring at her as she stared at him. El's lips parted in surprise and her heart swooned so wildly that she thought she might melt on the spot. *Mike.*

He was so *tall* now, still very slim but he seemed to have grown into his frame unlike when he was 14. His cheek bones were sharper, his lips plumper, his shoulders broader. But underneath all of that was the same boy El had fallen in love with. The dark messy hair, the freckles that she would see the moment she got closer and those *eyes*. Deep amber, so dark and beautiful like the night sky.

And just like that, she fell in love all over again.

"Earth to Mike," Dustin was laughing next to him.

"Shit, who is her friend?" Lucas gulped from his other side.

But it wasn't until Will shouted, "El!" and waved her over that Mike finally blinked and realised that he had been staring at her for an awkwardly long time. He coughed nervously, averting his eyes as El and her red head friend made their way through the heavy stream of people.

His eyes betrayed him again, his gaze falling down El's long legs. Even the way she *walked* was incredibly attractive. Mike knew it was

going to be hard to see her, but he had never expected his heart to pound so fast, for his pulse to quicken as his skin felt too tight to contain himself and butterflies that he long thought were dead immediately sprang to life.

"El it's so good to see you!" Will exclaimed as El and her friend finally stopped in front of the party.

"You too," El smiled softly, her eyes bright and happy. Mike felt himself swooning because even her voice which was ever so slightly more mature made his heart want to sing. Just hearing her again was overwhelming and made the young and vulnerable part of him want to sob, because she was *back*. She was here, in Hawkins and it was like nothing had changed. If anything, his feelings had only deepened.

Mike stood back slightly as El hugged the party in turn, introducing her friend Max to them all. He was too consumed with watching El, the movements of her body as she hugged her old friends, the nostalgic look in her eyes and the warm smile on her lips to notice the way Lucas clammed up when he shook hands with Max, or the way the red head smirked back at him, eyeing him up.

Finally El turned to Mike and he tried to clear his dry throat, a bashful smile slowly curving up his lips. He couldn't help but feel ecstatically happy as they stared at each other, a shy smile on El's lips as she took the first step.

Within a heartbeat they were embracing, longer than any of the others had. "Hi," Mike croaked breathlessly, closing his eyes and inhaling El's intoxicating scent. It hadn't changed. There was a floral perfume lingering over it, but that beautiful smell that was just *El* was still there. Mike found his arms around her tighten slightly, as his repressed feelings continued to swarm back into his heart like a dam breaking.

"Hi," El whispered against him, her small hands against the back of his sweater, goose bumps rising on his skin when he felt her fingers twitch slightly against the material.

They both reluctantly pulled away, their hands brushing against each

other's arms as they slowly parted. Mike felt the courage in his heart rising as he smiled in relief, thinking that maybe, *just maybe* El was feeling the same complex emotions that he was.

"It's so good to see you," Mike said in a rush of adrenaline, his eyes warm as they danced over El's features, trying to take in *everything* about her. "You look so beautiful."

El's eyes widened in surprise and a pleased grin quirked her very kissable lips as Mike blushed and averted his eyes, wanting to kick himself for allowing those words to slip off his tongue.

"Thank you," El said softly, biting her lower lip before taking a deep exhale. "You look really handsome, I like your sweater. I always used to like the ones your mom made you."

Mike's head shot up to meet El's eyes, shocked to see she wasn't teasing and she was *actually* complimenting him. He went to open his mouth and say something about her stealing his sweaters in freshman year, but he was interrupted by Will who was looking incredibly smug.

"Well El you continue to be the only person to ever like Mike's homemade sweaters."

As Mike rolled his eyes, El simply smiled and said, "I love them so much I used to steal them. In fact, I think I still have a few..."

"What?!" Mike couldn't help but laugh, his smile wide and playful. "Oh my god, did you take the grey winter one? With the Nordic pattern?!"

El bit her lip trying to suppress her grin, but it couldn't be more obvious she was trying to stop herself from laughing. She took a moment, meeting his gaze mischievously. "I still have it."

Mike gasped playfully and put a hand over his heart, "you *thief*!"

El was giggling, the sound making Mike's chest reverberate with warmth. "Well you *were* my boyfriend, so I had a claim in those sweaters!"

They both smiled for a moment, their lips slowly lowering as the last 14 years without one another hit them both. They had missed so much, so many firsts they could have shared together.

Sensing the building tension between them, Will cleared his throat loudly and said, "Dustin! Get more shots!"

El didn't know if it was the nostalgic tunes of years long since gone, the mood lighting, the gentle laughter between friends, the way she couldn't stop touching Mike's arm anytime he made her giggle like a school girl, or maybe it was just the shots. But whatever the cause, this evening was perfect.

They were all sat around a large circular table, Dustin supplying them all with endless drinks, glasses of wine, cocktails or orange juice in Laura's case. The group of people who had always been bullied and ridiculed were now the ones laughing. *Loudly.*

The air felt magical. Will proudly telling the story of how he and Damien met in art school and how he gave him the courage to come out. Laura making them all laugh with a re-enactment of Dustin finding out she was pregnant, Mike's exasperation when the others teased him over his Star Wars ringtone and Lucas practically blanking the whole group just so he could talk to Max. El watched them for a minute, smirking to herself at how taken they seemed with one another. Max was even twirling her hair, her smile practically seductive.

When El turned back to look at the party it was to find Mike gazing at her with a soft smile. She blushed immediately and they both averted their eyes. Slowly, El chanced another glance at that handsome face just as Mike's dark amber eyes found hers again. They both smiled bashfully at getting caught.

It seemed like the party had all learnt some kind of telekinesis, because couple by couple, they disappeared. First Will took Damien to dance, then Dustin and Laura wandered over to the buffet table before Max grabbed Lucas's hand and pulled him eagerly to the bar.

Mike and El had moved seats, now sat beside one another, leaning

their elbows on the table and talking quietly together, their knees brushing and causing shivers down their spines. Their smiles were softer still, their eyes drawing the other in.

They talked about everything except *them*. El expressed her feelings over losing her mom, what it had been like to be brought up by her dad and how much she loved him. She spoke about college, her determination to be a social worker and how incredibly difficult it was at times.

Mike told her how challenging it was to get on a Biomedical Engineering program at college and how hard the work had been. He talked about living in Boston, his job at the hospital and how Nancy and Will's brother Jonathan had got married.

"So you and Will are like brothers now!" El had laughed in surprise, shaking her head slightly at the coincidence.

They talked then about their childhoods together, being very careful not to mention the years they were *more* than friends.

It wasn't long before Mike's eyes wandered around the room, confusion flickering in his gaze before realisation set in. He laughed, feeling more at ease now that the alcohol was fuelling his courage. He turned back to look at El, still breathless from her beauty.

"I think this has been a set up."

"What do you mean?" she asked playfully, her chin resting in her palm as she grinned at Mike.

He laughed and pointed to the other side of the room, "look over there," he whispered leaning in slightly.

El turned in her seat and rolled her eyes exasperatedly as she noticed Max, Lucas, Damien, Dustin and Laura hunched around another table, watching Mike and El like they were their favourite tv show. The group were quick to look away, Dustin fumbling so much that he almost fell out of his seat.

"Oh my god," El laughed shaking her head in amusement and turning back to Mike who was grinning widely, his eyes filled with humour.

"It's like they think we're just going to start making out or something," she added with a teasing smile.

"I know right!" Mike chuckled, looking back at her, adoring, *loving*. They continued to stare, barely blinking as they admired all of the features and attributes they had always loved so much about each other.

Their smiles turned into something much softer and Mike coughed awkwardly, nervously swallowing as his heart raced over what he was about to say. "I missed you." The words came out breathlessly as Mike continued to stare at El, never wanting to stop.

Her eyes flickered with emotion, a stuttered breath escaping her throat as she smiled softly back at Mike. "I missed you too," she whispered, her chest heavy with the incomprehensible feelings she *still* had for her first and only love.

Just as Mike opened his mouth to say something, an all too familiar song started to play. The iconic baseline filling the large ball room. It was an odd choice for the 2018 reunion, but Mike and El recognised it instantly. It was *their* song.

Mike's eyes shot to the DJ booth and just as he had suspected, Will was carefully sneaking away from the DJ, clearly having just requested the song. Mike wanted to roll his eyes and tell his best friend to stop playing cupid. But in El's presence with the powerful and emotive music playing, nothing had ever been more perfect.

Feeling nervous but sure, Mike pushed back from the table, standing up and smiling tenderly at El as he slowly held his hand out to her. "Can I have this dance?"

El's lips parted slowly in surprise, her eyes welling up with tears as she nodded her head, too choked to speak as her palm pressed against Mike's palm, electricity shooting through their veins as his fingers clasped around her own, fitting as perfectly as the first time they held hands.

Mike led El onto the dance floor, paying no mind to the very few couples dancing or the eyes that followed them. Especially the eager

ones coming from the table in the corner.

They were in the middle of the dance floor when Mike stopped, turning so that he was facing El. He could barely think straight as his hands found her slim waist and her bare arms wrapped around his neck, reminiscent of their first ever dance at the Snow Ball.

They moved in sync, softly turning and swaying to the music that they knew so well. Their eyes were locked, time slipping away from them. All of the years spent apart no longer mattering, because those eyes had known each other, in this life and *every* life.

Since you've gone I've been lost without a trace

I dream at night I can only see your face

El's heart was racing, her skin was hypersensitive as it brushed against Mike's neck. She could feel the warmth of his palms against her waist and she had never felt so complete than in his arms. She was safe, she was finally *home*.

I look around but it's you I can't replace

I feel so cold and I long for your embrace

Mike couldn't stop looking into El's eyes, completely entranced by her from the age of 12. The feelings were only stronger now because he knew what it was like to live without her. She was the *only* girl he had ever wanted, the only soul he could possibly imagine sharing his *life* with.

I keep crying baby, baby, please

Nothing else existed but El as Mike slowly leant in, his eyes fluttering shut just as he saw El reaching up to meet him. And in the middle of the reunion, to *their* song, they shared their first kiss as adults.

It was like restarting their lives. Every memory they had suppressed came back in a force of light, their souls complete and singing with joy.

El's moved her palms to Mike's cheeks, a heavenly sigh escaping her

lips as they continued to kiss. Their mouths moving as one, performing a routine that had been set in their blood and their beating hearts. It was a dance that was a part of both of them.

Mike's arms wrapped around El pulling her in closer but not breaking the kiss for a second. *He* was home. *She* was home.

And this was only the beginning.

AN: Okay I was going to do so much more with this story, but I literally ran out of time because I'm going away tomorrow for the weekend and I need to write the other themes too if I want them out on time!

This was honestly one of my favourites to write so far. It gave me such nostalgia and I just know that Mileven would reunite in every lifetime, they belong together. Yes, I am crying in the club *sobs*

I hope you did enjoy this one. Please let me know what you thought!
:-)

4. The Weirdo In The Woods

The Weirdo In The Woods

AN: Day 4 of Mileven Week! And today we have an identity swap and look at what would have happened if it was El who found Mike in the woods! (Yes, that does sound like I'm advertising a documentary haha)

I've also incorporated Max into this, because let's be honest she's amazing.

November 6th 1983

"Will!" El shouted, her voice echoing through the dense quiet forest before Max, Lucas and Dustin called for him too. Their tones raised and slowly turning into concern.

They had been playing hide and seek where the Denfield woods twisted into what the party called Mirkwood. El knew she wasn't meant to have travelled this far away from the cabin where she lived, but what her dad, the Chief of Police didn't know wouldn't kill him.

"Maybe he went home," Dustin reasoned, unable to shake the nerves from his voice.

"Why would he just go *home*?" Max scoffed as she zipped up her jacket with a shiver. The approaching evening was causing them all to shudder from the falling temperatures.

"Yeah, we were in the middle of hide and seek," Lucas added in confusion as they continued to search the woods, trying not to leave any stone unturned.

"Will!" El tried again, getting louder until the birds in the high nests flapped their wings and flew off. The sky was turning deeper blue, indicating they were running out of time before their parents returned from work and noticed they were missing.

"Oh man, look at those storm clouds," Dustin groaned as he pointed

to where a heavy mass of dark grey clouds were starting to roll in. The sight only strengthened El's determination to find their missing friend.

"We *have* to keep looking," she said with a sharp exhale, her small fists clenching as she continued her brisk walk through the now unfamiliar woods.

"It's gonna be dark soon," Max muttered as they treaded through the forest, pushing branches away from their faces and crunching leaves under their feet. "Has anyone got a flashlight?"

Lucas halted, eagerly pushing the straps of his backpack down his arms. "Yeah I do," he answered breathlessly. He always seemed to get breathless around Max. She suggested he get an inhaler.

He put the bag on the floor, unzipping it with slightly shaky fingers as he sifted through the contents and pulled out the flashlight, grinning like a fool as he handed it over to Max.

"Thank you," she replied giving him a quick smile, hoping the others wouldn't see.

"What the hell is in that bag?" Dustin asked with burning curiosity as he leaned over the open backpack.

"Oh," Lucas answered with a proud smile as he started routing through the contents. "Binoculars from NAM, army knife always from NAM, hammer, camouflage bandana *and* the wrist rocket."

El, Max and Dustin all paused simply to stare at Lucas, blinking in confusion as the silence filled Mirkwood once more.

"I'm sorry...are we trying to find Will or the Demogorgon?" Dustin asked, breaking the awkward silence as the party all smiled weakly, thinking of their long days spent playing D&D at the cabin. El was their Dungeons Master, her creativity being the best to think of elaborate campaigns for them to enjoy.

Lucas sighed in disappointment that the party wasn't more impressed with his stock as he forcefully zipped up the backpack and hauled it over his shoulder. "*Be prepared*," he said with a pointed look at

Dustin, reprimanding him with the scouts saying.

"Hey! I *am* prepared," Dustin called back, already pulling off his own backpack.

Max snorted in amusement, her blue eyes flickering over the bag that Dustin was hurrying to open. "Oh really? What have you brought?"

"All righty," he replied in a breezy voice, paying no mind to Max's teasing tone. "So we've got Nutty Bars, Bazooka, Pez, Smarties, Pringles, Nilla Wafers, apple, banana and trail mix."

"Seriously?" Lucas cringed, shaking his head in disappointment.

"We need energy for our travels!" Dustin shot back in frustration.

"Yeah like you're really gonna share," Max mumbled before a wicked smirk curved on her lips. Before Dustin could respond, El hurried to speak.

"Guys this doesn't matter! We need to find Will. He's out there somewhere and we just need to find him okay?!"

The party all nodded remorsefully and once again they were on the move, trying to ignore the fast approaching thunderclouds as they shouted Will's name into the darkening woods. It didn't look as friendly now, with the branches throwing haunting shapes around, the increasing cold making their breath come out in wisps of vapour.

Max and Dustin fought over the flashlight as the sun disappeared behind the heavy grey clouds and El sighed exasperatedly as she took the torch from them, pointing it ahead as they carried on walking.

"Will!" El called out just as the downpour began. She looked up at the sky, the splatter of rain drops dripping down her face.

"We should turn back," Dustin shouted over the sounds of the storm.

"No, we've come too far!" Max called back, blinking away the rain water that hit her eyelashes and clouded her vision.

"We should get help from Will's mom," Dustin conceded as he

shivered in his jacket.

"We can do this ourselves!" Max shouted back.

"Max is right!" Lucas nodded, his eyes determined.

A rustle of leaves caught El's attention, her hazel eyes looking quickly around the forest.

"You're only saying Max is right because you like her!" Dustin teased while Lucas gasped, his eyes widening.

"I-I don't!" he spluttered out.

"Do!"

"*Don't!*"

"Guys shut up!" El hushed her friends, her grip tightening on the steering wheel. "I hear something," she whispered, her heart starting to race.

There was a louder rustling of leaves, the sound of hurried footsteps as the party whirled around in unison.

El thought she knew what it was like to feel captivated. She had been captivated by a pink pretty dress, Eggo Extravaganza and by her own imagination. But she had never been captivated by a person before.

Especially by a *boy*.

And certainly not by a pair of eyes; so emotive and so open to her in that moment, that it felt like everything else had disappeared.

His short dark hair was plastered to his face, his skin so pale he looked almost like a ghost as rain water swirled down his hollow cheeks. His full lips were slightly parted as he caught his breath, and his eyes. His dark eyes were startled, wide and scared, but also relieved. As if he had been looking for her and *finally* they were reunited.

El couldn't shake the feeling, but suddenly she felt as if she had been

looking for him too.

"Is there a number we can call for your parents?" El asked the boy calmly, after having convinced him to come back to the cabin with her and the party. He was sat on the couch and he hadn't spoken yet, seeming even more on edge as the storm pounded against the low roof. His thin body would jump with every flash of lightning.

El couldn't stop the warmth she felt in her chest, a feeling building inside of her to *protect* him.

Her own natural instinct didn't stop the party's inquisitive and sometimes suspicious questioning.

"Where's your hair?" Dustin asked with concern, noticing the boy's very short hairstyle. "Do you have cancer?"

"Did you run away?" Lucas questioned, his eyes taking in this boy cautiously.

"Are you in some kind of trouble?" El pressed on, her gaze gentle as she remained worried for the poor boy who was grey shorts and a drenched Benny's Burgers shirt. His chest was heaving while his dark eyes zoomed from one face to the next.

"Is that *blood*?" Max whispered in confusion as she stepped forward, her hand stretching out to where there was a red stain on the collar of the yellow shirt.

El immediately noticed the look of panic on the boy's face and quickly knocked Max's hand away. "Stop it! You're freaking him out!"

"He's freaking *me* out!" Max countered with exasperation as she flailed her arms.

"I bet he's *deaf*!" Dustin said helpfully before smacking his hands together near the boy's face making him jump back in surprise. El frowned at Dustin and looked back at the boy, finding it difficult *not* to look at him.

"Not deaf..." Lucas muttered, rolling his eyes in frustration.

El looked around at her friends, watching how they looked at the boy like he was an interesting animal they could observe. Her protective nature over him kicked in once more and she exhaled sharply.

"That's *enough*, all right?" El warned her friends before turning back to the boy who was now focusing solely on her, his dark eyes widening slightly and his lips parting as he tried to control his breathing. "He's just *scared*, and cold."

As El stared at the boy's drenched clothes an idea hit her, and she hurried to her bedroom. Her dad sometimes teased her for her love of clothing that could be considered more masculine like big sweaters and loose sweatpants. El didn't care, because they were comfy, and it didn't matter how dirty they got when she climbed the trees around the cabin.

She hurried to her clean laundry, picking up a navy-blue sweater and grey sweatpants, thinking they would probably fit the boy as he looked a lot thinner than even petite El was.

His eyes were on her the moment she came back into the room, his gaze darting between the clothes and her face. El couldn't help but smile slightly as she carefully handed the clothing over. "Here, these are clean okay."

The boy's expression was almost nervous as he took the clothes, his eyes widening at the feel of the material beneath his fingers. El's lips parted slightly as she watched him brush the sweater against his cheek, as if never having felt something as soft. It *did* something to her; her heart beating foolishly.

The boy carefully placed El's clothes to the side and stood up from the couch, the party watching him carefully, all of them silent for the moment.

His hands reached for his shorts and in one fluid motion he went to tug them down.

"No, no, no!" El shouted, her hands gripping his forearms to stop him.

"Oh my *god*!" Max squealed as she and the boys turned around.

"That's not right man!" Lucas shouted, keeping his back turned while Dustin shook his head in shock.

El felt oddly breathlessly as she caught the boy's gaze, shocked by how confused he looked. How could he not know that it wasn't appropriate to undress in front of them all?

But that feeling of protectiveness was flickering in her heart once again and instead of reprimanding him, she sighed and turned her gaze to the bathroom. "See over there?" El asked calmly as she pointed to a door just off from the living room. "That's the bathroom. *Privacy*. Get it?"

The boy stared at El for a moment, his eyes searching her face before some kind of recognition flashed into the dark orbs that she now realised up this close were a rich red amber.

He grabbed the clothes and walked slowly towards the bathroom, El hesitantly following him as Max, Lucas and Dustin slowly turned around, gaping at each other in shock of the weird boy's behaviour.

He was now stepping into the bathroom, curiosity flicking at his pale features as he stared up at the walls and the white painted ceiling. El gave him a moment before reaching for the door knob, carefully going to close the door before it was brought to an abrupt stop by the boy's hand.

They stared at each other, El's eyes surprised and the boy's expression panicked. "You don't want it closed?" she asked in confusion. Where was this boy *from*?

"No."

El blinked, stunned by his simple word but also captivated by his soft tone. She smiled ever so slightly, "Oh, so you *can* speak." El appraised the situation for a moment, before a simple solution came to her. "Okay well...how about we just keep the door..." She started to move the door, their eyes staying connected as if seeing her gentle gaze was giving the boy strength. "Just like this." El added, leaving the door open a crack as he continued to look at her, his palm resting against the edge of the door.

"Is that better?" she asked him hopefully, wanting whatever his concerns were to be lifted.

"Yes," the boy said with a ghost of a smile, making El nod in relief before turning away to give him the privacy she had just explained.

She hurried back over to Max, Dustin and Lucas who were shooting her confused and stunned expressions.

"This is *mental*." Max said crossing her arms and shaking her head in disapproval.

"At least he can talk." El defended both the boy and herself.

Lucas snorted, "he said no and yes!"

"He tried to get naked!" Dustin choked. "*Naked!*"

El rolled her eyes, sighing slightly as she tried not to blush.

"There's something seriously wrong with him. Like wrong in the head!" Max whispered, tapping her finger at her temple.

El felt her concern for the boy filling her chest as she argued with her friends, over where he had come from, where he was going and why El had chosen to bring him into her home. The discussion came to an abrupt ending when she decided to tell them that she was going to have the boy stay the night.

"Are you crazy?!" Max spluttered in shock, her blue eyes so wide it looked like they might pop out of her skull. "You can't stay *alone* with a boy! He's the weirdo we found in the woods."

El huffed in frustration and crossed her own arms, feeling defiant. "He's *not* a weirdo. And I won't be alone, dad will be here soon."

"I doubt the Chief is going to take kindly to a weirdo in the house," Lucas snorted in amusement, his eyes glancing over at the bathroom door for a moment.

"Well he's not *going* to find out. I'll put the boy in my blanket fort and put the sheet down, dad will never know."

"You know this isn't going to end well, right?" Max muttered, shaking her head and sighing heavily. But there was no stopping El, she was determined and courageous. And somehow helping this boy, was helping her too. She was curious about him and wanted to *help*.

Once the party had left with mutters of "crazy" and "I wouldn't let a weird boy stay in my house," El had finally coerced the scared boy into the blanket fort and carefully handed him a blanket.

He smiled slightly, his dark eyes meeting hers. "Hey," she said breathlessly from where she was knelt in front of him. "I never asked your name."

He rubbed his left wrist with his right palm but kept El's gaze, "Michael," he croaked out, his eyes vulnerable, drawing her in.

"Michael," El said with a slight smile. "Okay...well I'm El, short for Eleanor. Um, why don't I call you Mike? Short for Michael."

Mike nodded his head in understanding, a very small quirk of his lips making El realise he wanted to smile. She felt a strange fluttering in her stomach and took a deep breath. "Um...okay, well good night Mike."

El got up carefully, leaning forward to unhook the sheet so that it would cover the front of the fort. Just before she went to pull down the cover, she heard a soft, "Night El."

AN: I am sorry this is sooo short! It's my mum's birthday this weekend and today we've gone away to a lovely lodge in the woods! It's beautiful, but my 2 year old nephew has been attached to my hip which had made it so very hard to write. Unless you wanted me to include the moments when he kept tapping on my keyboard and wrote nonsense haha

But I do love him and I want to cherish my time with my family.

Hopefully I will have more time to spend on the theme tomorrow!

5. Let it Rain

Let it Rain

AN: YOU GUYS! I am so sorry this has taken so long to get to you. But the theme for this one shot of Mileven Week is "In the Rain"

November 7th 1983

*The rain was pouring down her frozen face as Mike continued to stare at her, his lips slightly parted in surprise at finding a girl in the middle of Mirkwood. A girl who looked so very **different** from any girl Mike had ever seen before.*

He continued to shine the flashlight at her face, barely remembering that Lucas and Dustin were either side of him, their hands trembling slightly with fear of this new person. Her chest was panting, her feet bare on the slippery fallen leaves and her yellow long-sleeved shirt was hanging off her, soaking wet.

Mike stared into her eyes and felt his breath catch at how gravity seemed to shift when she looked straight back, hazel glistening orbs filling his vision. He was twelve years old, not understanding the ways of the world yet. Not having experienced hardship, sorrow or heart break. But the sadness in the girl's eyes broke him, the way her frail frame shuddered concerned him and the devastation and fear written across her pale face made Mike want to protect her. His heart picked up speed, his pulse thumping in his ears as he slowly blinked and came back to the reality of the situation.

There was a frightened girl in Mirkwood, alone, soaking wet and freezing. Mike slowly lowered his flashlight while Lucas and Dustin looked hesitantly between the girl and their Paladin, their eyes a mixture of concern and curiosity as they awaited his word.

Mike kept eye contact with the girl as he carefully placed his torch on the wet ground, standing back up carefully as he reached to pull off his jacket. The girl flinched and took a step back.

"It's okay," Mike tried to say kindly, amazed by how softly his voice had appeared. The girl hesitantly stopped and watched him again. "Here," he tried again as he successfully tugged the jacket off and took a very slow step towards the girl.

Her eyes widened slightly as she quickly looked between the jacket and Mike as he stretched out his hand for her to take the jacket. "This will keep you warm," he said with a gentle smile.

The girl blinked in confusion, water droplets catching in her long eyelashes as her shaking hand slowly reached for the jacket. Mike didn't move, not taking a step closer to her, wanting her to know he was trustworthy.

He had no idea what had happened to this girl, but his stomach lurched at how jumpy and startled she seemed. Mike wondered if she had run away from home or gotten lost in the woods. What he did know for sure, was that he was going to help her.

The girl's hand finally reached the jacket, her fingers flexing into a grip as the material gathered in her palms. As she pulled the jacket towards her, her finger tips brushed against Mike's hand, causing them both to look up, their gazes meeting immediately as they gasped at the contact.

Mike knew the storm was in full swing and for a moment he felt like he could have been hit by a bolt of lightning when their fingers touched. A funny feeling was coming to life in his stomach, the strangest sensation of wings flapping while his heart pounded even harder. Mike gulped as he saw the girl's eyes go from terrified to calm.

But when a rumble of thunder could be heard, she became startled again. Gasping and looking around the dark woods as if she expected someone to jump out behind a tree.

"Hey, it's okay," Mike called calmly to her, lifting both of his hands up as he tried to get her to pay attention to him and not the storm that she was clearly so distressed by. His dark amber eyes flickered over the sodden yellow shirt and he sighed looking at his jacket on the floor that she had dropped during her fright.

Mike reached down for it and tried to give the girl a gentle stare as he took a step closer to her. "It's freezing, would you mind wearing this?"

"Mike she clearly doesn't want our help," Lucas mumbled, staying back with Dustin who nodded in agreement.

Mike looked back at his best friends and huffed a sigh. "Look at her. She's cold and scared. She needs our help."

When Dustin and Lucas didn't say anything other than glance at each other, Mike turned back to the girl who was staring at him curiously, her hazel eyes flickering over his face as if she was trying to decide whether he was a threat or not.

"Please, just trust me okay?" Mike asked her calmly, his gaze filled with concern for her. He couldn't even stop his need to help and protect her if he tried.

When she didn't flinch or back away from him, Mike took a cautious step closer to her, his jacket in his hands before he wrapped it around her dainty shoulders. She shivered at the contact for a moment and Mike swallowed down a lump in his throat as he stared at her, watching the way the rain slid down her cold and smooth skin.

Another rumble of thunder sounded, and she practically jumped in the air, her hand grasping at his forearm in reflex. Mike's eyes widened at the contact, but his main concern was her reaction to the storm.

He chanced a look at Lucas and Dustin before turning resolutely back to the scared girl. "Come on," he told her kindly. "I'm going to take you home."

November 7th 1987

Mike had just finished tying his burgundy tie when his amber eyes flickered to his bedroom window, his brow creasing in annoyance when he saw the dark rain clouds rolling in.

"Just great," he mumbled to himself before grabbing his suit jacket, pulling it on over his white collared shirt and black waistcoat.

It was Homecoming night and El had been waiting impatiently for the day to arrive. She had her dress picked out months ago, Mike knew how desperate she was to tell him what it looked like, but he

teased her playfully, wanting to be surprised.

She was at the Hopper/Byers house getting ready, probably giggling and singing along to the radio with Max while they did each other's hair. The mental image made Mike grin to himself before he remembered what had turned his mood in the first place.

Everything should have been perfect. Mike had his suit, his tie matching El's dress, her corsage safely in its box and the old cabin cleaned up and decorated romantically, rose petals and candles waiting for them. They both knew what they *wanted* to happen that night. It had been in the air between them for some time now, kisses becoming heated and touches becoming more intimate as their love threatened to devour them.

Now was their chance and Mike felt like everything had finally slotted into place. Well, except for the weather of course.

A storm was coming.

And while there were times when El managed perfectly well, other times consisted of her sobbing, shaking as Mike held her, trying to shush her and kiss her temple gently while she cried.

His fingers itched with the longing to hold her, to make sure she was okay and that was she was safe. He only wanted to love her the way she deserved and protect her. He had *always* wanted to protect her, even from the first moment he saw her. Especially in that first moment. Mike didn't think he would ever forget the fear in her eyes, and he never wanted to see that horrified expression ever again.

With that in mind Mike hurried to grab his wallet, car keys and the corsage before heading down the stairs, running out of the front door as quickly as his lanky legs would take him to avoid his mom's photography obsession.

Mike exhaled a relieved breath as he shut the driver's side door and buckled up his belt. A soft splattering noise caught his attention and he looked at the windshield, groaning at the raindrops that had started to fall.

He turned the key in the ignition, his brow furrowing in confusion when the car took a moment to start. When the engine was powered and rumbling as normal, Mike shrugged, putting it down to the cold weather as he pushed the stick into drive and made his way to El.

It wasn't a long journey and by the time he was parked on the drive of the 2-story home owned by Jim and Joyce Hopper, the rain was still fairly light, barely soaking into Mike's suit jacket as he held tightly onto the corsage box and headed for the front door, knocking even though Joyce and El had told him a million times to just come in. It was his second home after all, if not his first.

The reason he *didn't* just walk in the house came in the answer of the Chief of Police opening the door and smirking slightly as he took in Mike's suit. "You know she's not ready yet, right?" Hopper said as he pushed away from the frame so that his future son in law could walk in, closing the door behind him.

"I kind of guessed that," Mike grinned, his heart already expanding with love as he thought about El. His smile faltered as he looked at the rain drops stuck to the windows, glistening in the light of the living room like glitter. "I wanted to make sure she was okay. It looks like we're getting a storm."

"Yeah I know," Hopper sighed rubbing at his lined forehead absentmindedly. They were both very much aware of how El could be when the weather got really bad. "But if it's any consolation, I think she's been too busy singing and dancing with Maxine to even notice that it's raining."

Mike smiled slightly, a warmth filling his chest at how thankful he was for El and the life she now got to lead. Things were so different from that night four years ago. She had a family, a home, a bedroom of her own which she had welled up with excitement over when she decorated. She had friends; the party of course, Max being her best friend, but also other friends she had made in dance class and track. She was more popular than any of the party members and she could have easily climbed the social ladder if she *wanted* to. But she never did. She was content with her own inner circle and didn't want the drama that came with a clique.

And then she had him. And while Mike knew that really El could do much better, she blatantly denied it. They were a happy couple and only ever argued over the most trivial things like the very occasional bout of jealousy or El using her powers in moments when Mike worried it would encourage exposure. But he loved her more than anything and she loved him. There wasn't anything he wouldn't do for her if she asked and even from such a tender young age, Mike had always known that this was it for him. That *she* was it.

His head lifted up when he heard the sound of movement upstairs, his eyes widening with excitement while Hopper chuckled quietly next to him at the eager look taking over his face.

Will came down the stairs first, dressed in his black suit and laughing with Max who looked very pretty in a long navy-blue dress. When Mike and Hopper opened their mouths to compliment her she pointed a finger at them threateningly, "don't even dare. I am only wearing this to win a bet against Dustin who refused to believe I could wear something like this."

"Well I'm sure *Lucas* will approve," Will grinned while Max rolled her eyes in amusement, a slight blush creeping into her freckled cheeks.

"When is my daughter making an appearance?" Hopper asked as he crossed his arms impatiently, his eyes flicking between his step son and Max.

"Oh, she'll be down soon," the red head smirked, her eyes lingering teasingly on Mike. "You're going to die."

"Thanks," he laughed, his stomach twisting with nerves and a similar impatience to Hopper, wanting to see El in the dress that she had been desperate to talk about for weeks.

Will looked at his watch and turned to Max, "should we get going? We need to get Jen and Lucas."

The red head nodded in agreement and gave Mike one more smile, "try to remember how to breathe Wheeler." Max, Will and even Hopper chuckled as Mike sighed in exasperation and muttered a good bye to his friends.

"They sure like to tease you about El," Hopper commented with a small smile.

"*Everyone* likes to tease me about El."

"I think it's because you get this sappy look in your eyes and let's not forget that you admitted to a full room of your friends and some family that you called her for 350 – "

"353"

"353 days even though you weren't sure she was there or not."

"And whose fault was that?" Mike shot back, his eyes narrowing slightly as he stared at Hopper.

The Chief sighed slightly, "look kid, I know that was my fault. We've talked about that many times and I am not teasing you. In fact," he coughed awkwardly and shook his head.

"What?" Mike asked in confusion, his heart beat quickening as he tried to figure out what had the Chief of Police in such a fluster.

Hopper took a deep breath and smiled slightly at Mike, giving him one of the grins that were usually reserved for Joyce, El, Will or Jonathan. It was a smile that reached his blue eyes and made them look brighter as if he couldn't contain his happiness. "I know you're going to be in this family one day Wheeler. Hell I've known it from the moment you and El reunited. This is it for her, and I know you feel the same way. So yes, everyone is going to tease you because we all know how in love you both are."

Mike's chest tightened for a moment at the emotions stirring in his body. He rarely got to experience these candid moments with Hopper when they were both completely honest about how they felt. His lips quirked into a smile and his eyes lit up with happiness. "I suppose I can accept people teasing me for how in love I am. Because you're right, she is it for me Hopper. And I want to be with her for however long she wants me."

"For eternity then," the Chief grinned making Mike laugh softly and nod his head in agreement.

The sound of the stairs creaking caught their attention as they both whirled around to find El walking down gracefully with a beaming and proud Joyce standing behind her.

Both Mike and Hopper inhaled a sharp breath at the beautiful sight in front of them.

El was wearing a strapless lace burgundy knee length dress. The bodice was fitted, and the skirt swept out elegantly. Her lean legs looked even longer in the dress, her feet pushed up slightly with burgundy high heels. The strapless bodice meant Mike had a perfect view of the delicate sweep of her collar bones and her neck.

His eyes slowly moved up to her face, butterflies racing frantically in his stomach and his chest so tight he wanted to let out a sob at how beautiful she looked. Her curly hair was pinned up, two loose curls framing her face. She had on light make up, her pink lips even more pronounced by the highlight of her lip gloss.

But the most beautiful and attractive thing about her was those eyes sparkling with happiness and those gorgeous lips curved into a happy grin that lit up her whole face. She was *stunning*. Heartbreakingly beautiful and yet she chose him. Mike knew he would never take that for granted.

El seemed to be pleased by their reaction as she stepped closer to them both. Hopper was the first one to recover and he moved to her, engulfing her in a hug. "Honey you look *beautiful*."

"Thanks dad," El sighed happily from inside of her father's embrace. Mike's heart seemed to melt at the fulfilment on her face when Joyce joined in on their hug, words of "so *beautiful* sweetie," coming out of her mouth in a choked emotional tone.

When El finally managed to pull away from her parents she turned to look at Mike who was staring at her unashamedly, his grin wide and dopey, his eyes warm and sparkling with love as he took her in. She radiated beauty from the inside out. She was perfect for him from the very core of her soul to the tips of her delicate fingers.

"You look so handsome," she said in a breathy voice as her hazel eyes

flickered over Mike's suit, making a bashful blush flush to his cheeks. He loved how she still made him feel so special, and he knew that if she had her way, he would continue to feel that way for the rest of his life.

Mike reached for El, their fingers entwining as he pulled her closer, a happy smile threatening to crease into his cheeks forever. "And you look...absolutely stunning. I can't even explain how amazing you look El."

El's eyes were sparkling with contentment as she freed a hand to cup the back of Mike's head as she pulled him down for a kiss. His eyes fluttered closed just as their lips met, the butterflies soaring in his stomach and electricity lighting up his body. Every kiss with El felt like perfection and he basked in the moment, the hand not holding hers moving to her waist.

It wasn't until Hopper *loudly* cleared his throat did Mike and El pull away, both of them a little dazed but incredibly pleased with their kiss.

Mike let El playfully rub her lip gloss off his lips with the pad of her thumb before he fumbled to pick up the corsage box. "Here," he said breathlessly, opening the box to his beautiful girlfriend and the deep red and white roses, delicate baby's breath floral bracelet coming into view.

She gasped in delight, "Mike I love it," she swooned in affectionate before reaching out her hand and letting her boyfriend carefully tie the silver beaded bracelet onto her slim wrist.

"Photo time!" Joyce called happily, Jonathan's old camera already firmly in her grasp.

Mike and El looked at each other, too happy to even refuse as they laughed lightly and turned towards the camera. There were photos of them separately, photos of El with her parents and photos of them as a couple. Mike's arms around El's waist, her placing a kiss on his cheek, their smiles always as happy as they both felt inside of their hearts.

After what felt like a lifetime of flashing lights in his eyes, Mike was finally escorting El out of the front door. He was beyond thankful to see that she was handling the weather just fine, too distracted by her glowing happiness to delve in too deeply into the way storms could affect her mentally.

"You ready to go?" Mike asked turning to El with a smile, his hand on the steering wheel and the other laced with her fingers over the central console.

She grinned back at him, nodding her head happily. "Yes, let's go."

They were half way towards the high school when Mike realised something was wrong with the car. It was shuddering, the radio had cut out and then suddenly the vehicle came to a stop.

"What's wrong?" El asked in gentle confusion, her eyes lingering on Mike's face while he stared at the steering wheel for a moment in utter frustration.

"We've broke down," he explained as he tried to think of what he needed to do. The rain was coming down harder, pelting on the hood of the car and the roof. He sighed realising what he needed to do.

Mike turned to El and gave her hand a reassuring squeeze, "you just stay there okay? I'm just going to look under the hood and see if I can find the problem."

"But Mike it's raining," El whined tugging on his hand. "You'll get *soaked*. Can't I just try with my powers to – "

"No El!" Mike said quickly, shaking his head as his own anxieties rushed into his veins. He still had nightmares of losing her to the bad men, and he would never, *ever* be able to forgive himself if they exposed her over something as trivial as a broken down car.

Mike took a deep breath and gave his girlfriend a reassuring smile, "it might just be a loose wire. I'm just gonna take a look, you sit tight." He squeezed her hand again, trying to get a small nod out of her before hurrying to take off his seat belt and getting out of the warmth of the car and into the storm.

He tried not to cringe as the rain splattered across his face as he moved to the trunk first, pulling out a flashlight and walking around to the hood. Mike looked through the rain covered windscreen to see El waiting patiently and he sighed in relief that she was at least safe and dry.

Mike popped the hood open and squinted through the rain drops falling in his eyelashes as he pointed the flashlight at the engine compartment and then the oil and brake fluid. He hoped he at least *looked* like he knew what he was doing, because in reality he had no clue. Mike had been taught the very basics of cars, like changing a tyre and keeping an eye on engine levels, but this was kind of out of his ball park. This kind of thing would be a Hopper thing. But right now, Mike didn't *want* to admit to his girlfriend that he needed her dad to save them.

He tried to ignore the cold rain splattering down the back of his suit jacket as he fiddled with a few wires, checking if anything had gotten loose or if anything was obviously wrong.

"Have you fixed it?" El's voice startled Mike so much that he narrowly avoided hitting his head on the hood top when he jumped. He held a hand over his heart, gasping for breath.

"El you scared me," Mike said before blinking in confusion and whirling around to see his girlfriend stood in the rain next to him. Rain drops falling on her bare shoulders as she inched closer to the engine, narrowing her eyes as she tried to have a good look at what was wrong. "El, go back in the car, you're going to ruin your dress."

She ignored him, giving him a playful smirk as she continued to look for a problem. Mike reluctantly let her take a glance, hoping her years with Hopper had helped her to learn more about cars than he knew. To her credit, she did know a lot as she checked levels and asked Mike to try turning on the engine as she worked her way around the car trying to decide what it was. In the end she sighed, looking up at Mike who had just exited the car again. "I think it's the battery, it must have been coming to the end of its life. You need a replacement."

"Uh great," Mike huffed as he smacked a wet hand to his already

soaked face. He wanted to kick himself and then kick his dad for giving him such a crap second hand car.

He dropped his hand from his face, cringing when he realised that El was just as drenched as he was. Her curls dripping wet, her mascara running slightly under her eyes and her dress deepening in colour from the rain.

Mike hurried to take off his suit jacket and handed it over to his girlfriend with a remorseful face, "El I am so sorry," he choked out, feeling his body shuddering from a combination of the cold rain and the utter sadness of ruining his girlfriend's Homecoming night. The night she had been counting down until, the dress she had been dreaming of and the night they were going to...

"Sorry?" El asked in confusion while she pulled her arms through the sleeves of Mike's suit jacket. "Why are you sorry?"

He wanted to laugh at how sweet she was being. He pointed to the car, "this is my fault. Maybe if I'd maintained it better, or I don't know...checked it over before I came and got you. We could have been at the Homecoming dance now."

Mike covered his face with his palms and heaved a sigh. "You could be dancing now and having fun. Instead you're stuck here with me."

There was a moment of silence, the only sound being the gentle pounding of the rain splattering on their clothes and hitting the car was the occasional tap. Suddenly there was a static noise ripping through the silence before Mike dropped his hands and realised that the car lights were now on, basking him and El in warm light while the radio came to life, the station half way through *Africa* by Toto.

Mike turned to his girlfriend who was a lot closer to him then she had been a moment ago. "El," he breathed out before she pressed her finger to his lips to stop him from talking.

She smiled almost playfully before her lips and eyes softened as she gazed at him. "For my Homecoming I just want you. I only *ever* want to be with you."

Mike's chest seemed tight with emotion as he pulled her closer, their wet foreheads pressing together as their eyes fluttered shut, the rain pouring down their faces, the water mixing together before sliding down their jaws.

"I love you," Mike whispered, breathing her in and filling his senses with her sweet and alluring scent.

El smiled against him, "I love you too. *Always.*"

The song slowly faded out and the beginnings of something familiar flooded in. It was a Bryan Adams tune that Mike knew El was in love with.

He pulled back slightly, opening his eyes just as El's wet lashes fluttered open too. They stared at each other, soft smiles lighting up their wet faces. Nostalgia and love mixed beautiful in Mike's heart as he said, "do you wanna dance?"

El let out a sob that was mixed with a laugh of recognition. Her eyes welled up, but she managed to answer, "I don't know how."

Oh thinking about all our younger years

There was only you and me

We were young and wild and free

Mike grinned, his arms already reaching for her again. "I don't either. Do you wanna figure it out?"

El's lips trembled as she nodded, her arms wrapped around Mike's neck and pulled him down closer.

Now nothing can take you away from me

We've been down that road before

But that's over now

You keep me coming back for more

Mike's hands cupped El's waist, his eyes basking in her beauty, her shyness as she dipped her head just as she had all those years ago at the Snow Ball. Mike felt choked by how much he loved her and instinctively pulled her closer, swaying slowly to the music.

Baby, you're all that I want

When you're lying here in my arms

I'm finding it hard to believe

We're in heaven

El looked up at Mike, their eyes connecting and their hearts beating fast. "This is perfect," she whispered. "This is all I could have wanted for Homecoming."

Oh once in your life you find someone

Who will turn your world around

Bring you up when you're feeling down

Yeah nothing could change what you mean to me

Oh there's lots that I could say

But just hold me now

Cause our love will light the way

Their lips met, their mouths moving together in a perfect harmony, lighting their wet bodies with warmth and a glow that no storm could put out.

I've been waiting for so long

For something to arrive

For love to come along

Now our dreams are coming true

Through the good times and the bad

Yeah I'll be standing there by you

Their foreheads met once more, content smiles on their faces as they closed their eyes and just let the rain pour down on them as it had done the first time they ever met.

Maybe the storm wasn't so bad, maybe after the rain would come a rainbow so beautiful that it would lit the way for a beautiful future, filled with love, laughter, marriage, children and the endless happiness that they both deserved.

And love is all that I need

And I found it there in your heart

It isn't too hard to see

We're in heaven, heaven, oooh

You're all that I want

You're all that I need

"And they all got colds. The end." Haha :-)

I am kind of sad and disappointed with myself for not getting Day 5 and Day 6 of Mileven Week themes out to you all I've been away with my family and didn't get any chance to write. I hoped I would, but it didn't work out that way!

So I apologise this one is a day late, but I've wanted to write this from the moment that I first saw the prompt, and I had to incorporate my favourite song too!

I hope you liked it and please let me know what you thought.

I'm sorry for not completing the week :-(